

THE GREAT FOREST

The forests of the Central Highlands of Victoria are the forests of the Gunaikurnai, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Peoples. They form an arc around the city of Melbourne and extend into the Victorian Alps. Virtually all of the water used by 5 million Melburnians and many people north of the Great Dividing Range comes from the forests of the Central Highlands.

This new book from Allen and Unwin will take you through the forests, from the Mountain Ash trees - the tallest flowering plants in the world (they can reach a height of 90–100 metres) to the cool temperate rainforests, relicts from more than 60 million years ago, which provide refuge for animals after bushfires.

These forests support a remarkable diversity of wildlife including 70 species of birds, and a rich assembly of possums and gliders. They have been logged for more than 150 years. This has caused major damage to ecosystems, threatening biodiversity and reducing their capacity to generate water and store carbon.



This fact sheet is designed to complement the book *The Great Forest* by David Lindenmayer, with photographs by Sarah Rees, Chris Taylor and Steven Kuiter. Allen & Unwin, 2021



How to support the Great Forests



Declare a new national park: The Great Forest National Park

- Invest in Great Forest National Park infrastructure and tourism to create jobs and support regional communities.
- Invest in scientifically informed management of this park to help recover species and protect ecosystems.

Recognise First Nations sovereignty

- Support Traditional Owners to work on country including cultural burning and restoration.

Cease native forest logging by 2024 (75% reduction by 2023)

- This will allow old growth forests to expand and reduce the fire risks associated with young logged and regenerated forest stands.
- Transition VicForests to VicCarbon to create a new income stream for Victorians, and establish an onground carbon workforce as part of the state's commitment to tackle climate change.

Move to an entirely plantation-based timber industry

- Process plantation eucalypt pulp logs grown in Victoria (and currently exported to Asia) to create jobs and boost the forest industry.

Engage in early detection and rapid suppression fire management

- Involve First Nations and regional communities in fire management.
- Establish a new program to employ former logging contractors as elite firefighters.
- Embrace new technologies that allow for rapid detection and suppression of fires.