

**POLICY STATEMENT NO. 27**

**CALM'S ROLE IN MANAGEMENT OF  
VEGETATION IN RURAL AREAS**

**AUGUST 1990**

**1 OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVE**

To work with the rural community to retain, restore and increase tree and shrub cover throughout the State's rural areas to achieve sustainable economic land use and the conservation of natural species and processes.

**2 DEFINITIONS**

"Production": products from trees and shrubs sold off the farm (e.g. wood, oils, wildflowers) or consumed on the farm (e.g. farm-timber and fodder).

"Conservation" is defined in the State Conservation Strategy for Western Australia as: .. "The management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to present generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations. Thus conservation is positive, embracing preservation, maintenance, sustainable utilisation, restoration, and enhancement of the natural environment.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, conservation herein includes soil, water and nature conservation, particularly where these involve the use of trees and shrubs .

"Amenity": benefits provided by trees and shrubs such as shade and aesthetics.

"A land care ethic": the duty of humans to recognise that, for their own benefit, they must have a symbiotic relationship with their environment, and must care for that environment.

**3 BACKGROUND**

The agricultural development of the south-west of Western Australia has involved the clearing of some 17 million hectares of virgin forest, woodland and shrubland in the past 100 years. This development has brought the State considerable economic benefit, but its adverse impacts in land and water degradation, including loss of nature conservation values, was never foreseen. It is now widely recognised that these adverse impacts must be arrested and reversed. To this end a strong landcare movement has emerged in the rural community.

CALM has a major contribution to make to this movement, given its role in the following areas:

- a statutory duty to conserve native flora and fauna throughout the State;
- a statutory duty to manage State forests and other lands for production and conservation, and to encourage the provision of forest products;
- a long standing history of providing advice on tree growing to farmers;
- an important role in the Remnant Vegetation Protection Scheme, encouraging farmers to fence remaining native vegetation on farms (which has highlighted the question of how best to manage these remnants);
- the development of the forestry sharefarming concept and its use of fast growing eucalypts as a commercial farm crop in the wetter than 600 millimetres rainfall zone which promises an economic solution to land and water degradation problems.
- research into, and promotion of agroforestry systems for commercial and conservation benefit.
- long experience in plantation forestry.

The Western Australian system of conservation reserves is not sufficient to protect the full range of natural communities and species. Nor is it adequate to provide other "ecological services", such as prevention of salination and erosion on adjacent farmlands.

With the current upsurge of interest in tree planting and land-care, farmers are planting millions of trees annually, largely for soil conservation purposes. Little information is readily available to landowners as to species which will, in addition to the soil conservation/windbreak function they seek, also provide nature conservation and economic benefits.

Furthermore, for farmers already interested in retaining native vegetation specifically for conservation and production, little technical advice or financial incentive is available.

CALM is ideally positioned to provide such information and services and so to encourage the retention, rehabilitation and replanting of vegetation to meet requirements for land protection as well as nature conservation and commercial production.

CALM and the Department of Agriculture have complementary responsibilities for rural conservation. This Policy will also provide a framework for liaison between the two departments.

#### **4 POLICIES**

The Department will:

- 1 Promote a land care ethic with an emphasis upon nature conservation and the multiple benefits of trees and shrubs.
- 2 Develop and encourage in rural parts of the State, a system of vegetated areas, including and additional to land managed by CALM, which conserves indigenous species of plants and animals and environmental processes.

- 3 Provide the necessary services and programs to assist and encourage the rural community to manage vegetation on its land so as to protect soil, water and wildlife as an integrated part of sustainable and profitable agriculture; this should be consistent with CALM's objectives for production and conservation.
- 4 Develop and utilise the economic, conservation and amenity benefits of trees to stimulate and finance extensive adoption of tree and shrub planting.

## 5 STRATEGIES

The Department will:

- 1 Maintain a Vegetation and Tree Planting Advisory Service comprising specialist staff who will work cooperatively with other agencies, project groups, and regional, district, research and extension staff from within CALM, to:
  - (i) ensure that suitable strategies and techniques for propagating, establishing, regenerating and managing vegetation are identified and implemented - special emphasis will be given to strategies for managing vegetation as an integrated part of catchment and farm management;
  - (ii) provide, via an advisory group within the Service, extension, advisory and consulting services to the rural community to facilitate revegetation, production and conservation on rural lands;
  - (iii) provide, via a consultative group within the Service, specific services such as data analysis (including economic analysis), investment advice and operational contracts for commercial operations;
  - (iv) specify and charge appropriate consulting fees.
  - (v) train regional and district staff to take an active and effective role in implementing these strategies; and
  - (vi) assist as appropriate in implementing other strategies herein.
- 2 Contribute to the conservation and management of native vegetation by:
  - (i) developing a flora, fauna and vegetation data base;
  - (ii) developing a rating system which identifies the relative importance of native vegetation remnants;
  - (iii) buying and managing land;
  - (iv) leasing and managing land (for example, under Section 16 of the CALM Act if appropriate);
  - (v) encouraging private groups, such as wildlife societies, to manage land and establish private trusts for such purposes;

- (vi) Supporting the creation of a CALM Conservation Trust to receive bequests and endowments, enter into agreements with landowners and purchase land for the purpose of protecting native vegetation;
  - (vii) encouraging landowners to register the purpose of protected areas on their properties as a caveat on title, especially where Government assistance is provided.
  - (viii) encouraging landholders to manage their land consistent with conservation objectives through:
    - (a) promotion of a land care ethic; and
    - (b) promotion of appropriate incentive schemes e.g.
      - seek to extend or amend as appropriate the Remnant Vegetation Protection Scheme;
      - assist with costs involved in fencing off small areas of special value, especially those containing gazetted endangered species, provided the landowner undertakes in writing to maintain the fence in good condition throughout his or her occupation of the land; (See Administrative Instruction No. 34.); and
      - support, where appropriate, taxation rebates and deductions;
  - (ix) developing and promoting management practices which will sustain in perpetuity all native vegetation types. Where appropriate, this should include opportunity for productive use;
  - (x) developing and promoting regeneration and rehabilitation of degraded native vegetation;
  - (xi) encouraging the use of local seed sources in regeneration and rehabilitation of native vegetation;
  - (xii) seeking to eradicate negative incentives (e.g. clearing conditions on CP blocks); and
  - (xiii) creating and/or implementing disincentives to the inappropriate clearing of vegetation.
- 3 Encourage the planting of trees and shrubs for their production, conservation and amenity benefits by:
- (i) developing planting options which provide a full range of these benefits in rural situations;
  - (ii) developing a data base to consolidate and organise existing and new data on production, conservation, and amenity values of species. Information held should, when appropriate, be readily available to the wider community;
  - (iii) identifying market opportunities and available resources;
  - (iv) identifying the species which are likely to be of major value in tree and shrub planting. This will include the production of improved seed from seed orchards and the genetic improvement of production species;

- (v) developing and operating partnership arrangements with landowners to grow commercial tree and shrub crops as an integral part of farming systems;
  - (vi) buying or leasing land as appropriate for commercial production and research;
  - (vii) not encouraging tree planting which involves the prior removal of healthy remnant native vegetation;
  - (viii) favouring the use of local species where appropriate;
  - (ix) selling, through CALM nurseries, trees and other plants which are most suitable for conservation, production and amenity;
  - (x) encouraging private nurseries to sell trees and other plants which are most suitable for conservation, Production And Amenity; and
  - (xi) collecting, recording, storing and selling seeds of locally indigenous species and improved seed of other species through the CALM seed centre.
- 4 Improve liaison with other government authorities and community organisations to ensure that a coordinated, effective and efficient approach is taken to conservation and production by:
- (i) ensuring that the internal organisation of CALM and communications within the organisation contribute to effective liaison;
  - (ii) developing joint projects with other government authorities and community organisations, for example as exemplified by the Roadside Conservation Committee;
  - (iii) developing joint or coordinated policies with other organisations such as Greening Australia and the State Land Conservation Advisory Committee; and
  - (iv) supporting the Remnant Vegetation Steering Committee as an appropriate coordinating body to continue investigating and supporting other methods of providing incentives to landowners for long term protection of native vegetation on private land.
- 5 Undertake and encourage relevant research by:
- (i) identifying priorities and targets for scientific, economic and social research;
  - (ii) favouring research which includes development and demonstration aspects;
  - (iii) considering all relevant fields including:
    - production values of plants native to rural areas;
    - community values of remnant native vegetation;
    - community attitudes to the aims of this policy and ways to encourage their positive development;

- ecological functions of remnant vegetation and means of sustaining these functions; and
  - other matters relevant to the implementation of this policy.
- (iv) funding, according to priorities established by the Vegetation and Tree Planting Advisory Service, research work from consulting revenues.
- 6 Implement a community education strategy to pursue the aims of this policy by:
- (i) identifying priorities, target audiences, and appropriate media and methods;
  - (ii) developing appropriate extension materials (e.g. tree planting and silvicultural guides, remnant managers' guides); and
  - (iii) encouraging land managers and nurserymen to identify planting stock by species, seed source and pedigree.
- 7 Help integrate rural land management by:
- (i) ensuring that shrubs and trees make an optimum contribution to whole farm plans;
  - (ii) promoting and facilitating land use planning on a catchment, district and regional basis;
  - (iii) seeking to meet regional land use objectives consistent with the interests of landowners and leaseholders;
  - (iv) aiming to achieve an optimum nature conservation system in the design of farm and catchment plans; and
  - (v) developing criteria to establish priorities for action. These criteria will recognise water resources, nature conservation, and agricultural problems.
- 8 Ensure that the Department obtains the maximum assistance from any sources of external funds to implement the above policies and strategies. Potential sources include the Save the Bush, National Afforestation Program, National Soil Conservation Programs and- via community groups- the Billion Trees Project. Improving access to these funds should be included within a coordinated CALM position on external funding.
- 9 Establish a CALM coordinating committee to oversee the implementation of this policy. The committee will be made up of representatives from the Advisory Service, Research, Silviculture, Nature Conservation and Regional Management.

Syd Shea  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Distribution Lists: A, B, C, D, E & F