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QUEENSLAND

REPORT

OF THE

DIRECTOR OF FORESTS

FOR THE

YEAR 1949-50

A. H. TUCKER, Government Printer, Brisbane.

Report of the Director of Forests for the Year ended 30th June, 1950.

INTRODUCTION.

For the past year forest operations have been seriously affected by an unduly heavy and prolonged wet season. In view of this and the fact that the output of Hoop and Bunya Pine has declined by a further $11\frac{1}{2}$ million super. feet, the total cut of mill logs from Crown lands of 201,960,000 superficial ft. as compared with 207,600,000 superficial ft. for the previous year, was quite satisfactory.

In 1940-41 the production of Hoop and Bunya Pine from Crown forests reached a peak of 146,000,000 superficial feet and within a period of nine years it has progressively fallen to a cut of 55,200,000 superficial feet (see graph page 5). Whilst the latter figure has been somewhat depressed by adverse weather, the regular downward trend is inevitable because of the limited supplies now remaining.

This is a most significant figure in the State's timber position. The increasing scarcity of these species is enforcing a full realisation of their outstanding qualities. Queensland is now paying the price for past neglect in not initiating and maintaining an adequate softwood planting programme to maintain production to meet our softwood requirements.

The local plywood industry is now importing inferior quality peeler logs at approximately double the price of Hoop Pine logs while sawn softwood of much lower grade is being brought from other countries at a greatly increased price.

Hoop Pine is a fast growing softwood, possibly the fastest growing conifer indigenous to the Southern Hemisphere. Early experimental plots indicate that quality timber can be produced in a relatively short rotation.

Perhaps the most urgent task facing the Forest Service is the rebuilding of the State's softwood resources, the objective being an area of 200,000 acres as soon as possible. In this programme, provision must be made to plant hoop pine to the extent that we have suitable land, filling up with the most satisfactory exotic pines.

Hence a most pleasing feature of the year's work was the establishment of a record area of approximately 5,000 acres of softwood plantation, bringing the total to over 43,000 acres. This planting was 1,140 acres in excess of the previous best, realised 10 years ago.

However, the discontinuance of planting during the war period has resulted in a loss in establishment of some 25,000 acres which must be made good as quickly as possible (see graph page 5). A planting of 5,000 acres should be the absolute minimum annual target of the future, as even at this rate it will take over 30 years to achieve the objective.

Investigation of experimental plantings in North Queensland shows that Hoop Pine is growing rapidly and that Maple is showing such promise that a planting programme is being prepared for the establishment of both species.

The programme of protection and natural regeneration work in the hardwood and Cypress Pine areas was continued, an area of 38,756 acres being treated during the year, of which 19,576 acres were dealt with for the first time.

A very important development during the year was the passing of "The Timber Users' Protection Act," which prohibits the use of lyctus susceptible and unseasoned timber in buildings or furniture where its use would be detrimental.

Fears were expressed that this measure would lessen the supplies of timber for these purposes; but on the contrary it has encouraged the erection of immunisation plants and thereby increased the supply of satisfactory and suitable timber for home building and furnishing.

I would like also, in these introductory remarks, to point out the considerable progress that has been made in the improvement of forest workers' accommodation, 41 additional barracks, accommodating 250 men, having been completed during the year.