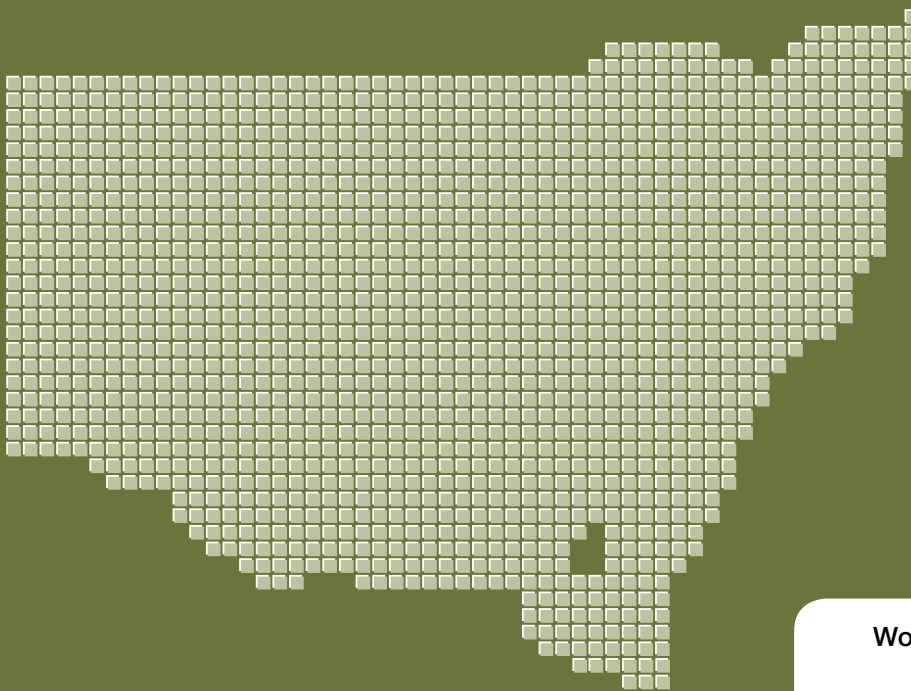


NSW Government

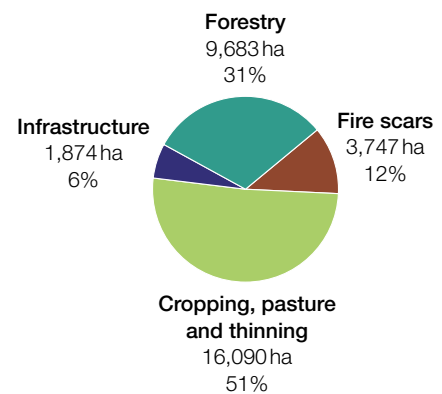
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NSW Woody Vegetation Change 2004 to 2006 Report



- This dot represents the true to scale amalgamated total of annualised woody vegetation change in NSW of 31,394 ha per annum or 0.04% of the area of NSW.

Woody vegetation categories
totalling 31,394 ha

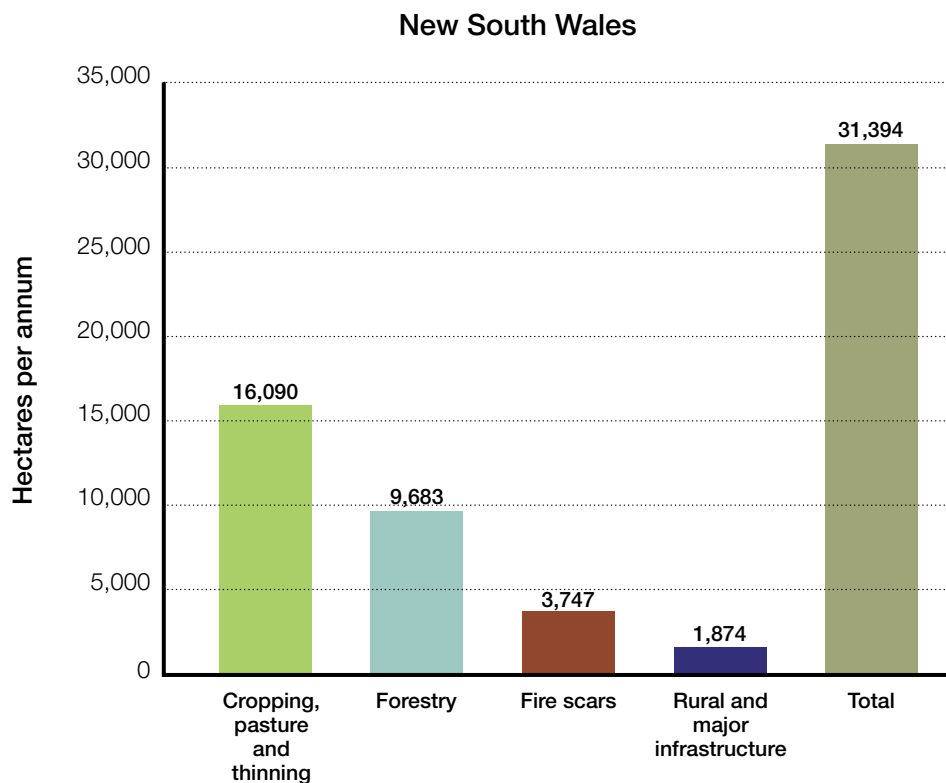


NSW Woody Vegetation Change 2004 to 2006 Report

Total reduction in the area of native vegetation in NSW over the period 2004 to 2006 was 31,394 hectares per annum or 0.04% of the area of NSW.

This area is made up of the following categories of change:

Table 1: Annual rates of woody vegetation change 2004 to 2006 in different categories (all figures are annual rates of change from the two year period).



Woody Vegetation for the purpose of this report is defined as woody communities with 20% crown cover or more (eg woodlands, open forests and closed forests) and taller than about 2 metres. This definition is in line with the Montreal Protocols for woody vegetation.

Where did the changes occur

Changes in Woody Vegetation occurred across NSW, with the major changes for the different categories shown below:

Cropping, pasture and thinning

- the major changes due to agricultural activities were identified in the Western and Central West areas of NSW.

Forestry

- the majority of forestry activity was identified on the coast and tablelands.

Fire scars

- major fire scars were identified around Gosford on the Central Coast and Lake Cowal in the Central West of NSW. Other fires, such as the Junee fire (January 2006), did not result in significant woody vegetation change due to predominant burning of agricultural land.

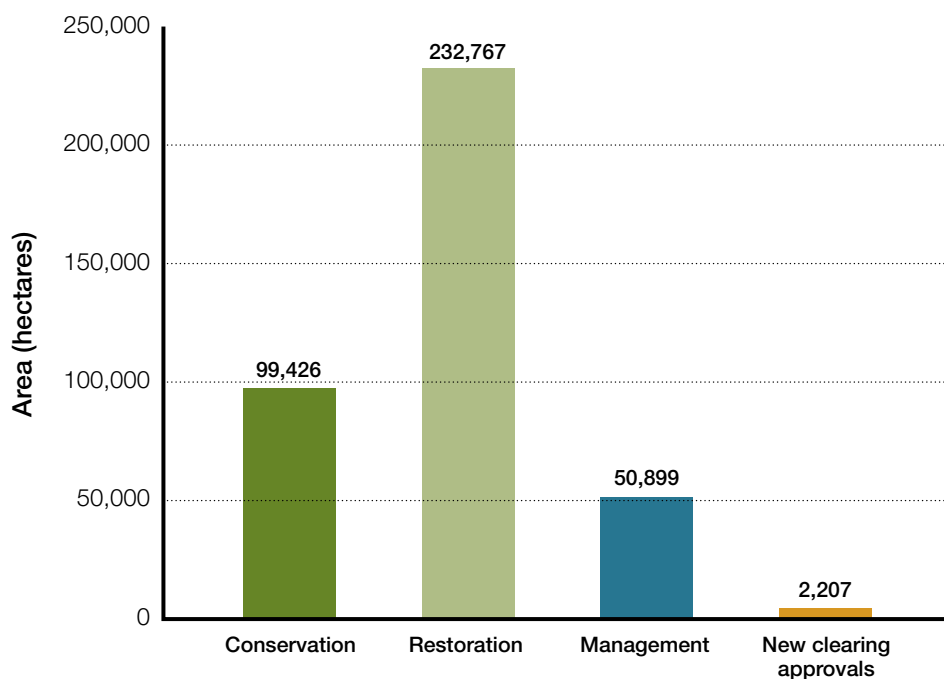
Rural and major infrastructure

- major changes due to rural and major infrastructure, such as clearing for buildings, roads, power lines, fence lines, and mine development, occurred in the Hunter, Western and Lower Murray/Darling areas of the state.

Links to the Native Vegetation Report Card

This report, along with the Native Vegetation Report Card, adds another piece of valuable information to our understanding of what is happening with native vegetation across the state. The Report Card has identified land manager commitment to the sustainable management of native vegetation.

Table 2: Area of native vegetation that has been conserved, restored, managed, and including new clearing approvals – 1 January to 30 June 2006



For further details of this graph refer to the “NSW Native Vegetation Report Card – 1 January to 30 June 2006”, published by DNR at www.nativevegetation.nsw.gov.au


Methodology

The Woody Vegetation Change Report 2004 to 2006 is the result of applying satellite imagery analysis techniques to NSW data to provide woody vegetation change figures across NSW. The methodology was developed over many years by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water as a scientifically based approach for reporting change in woody vegetation (above **20% canopy cover**) and is known as the *Statewide Landcover and Tree Survey (SLATS)*.


This report is the first to be provided on the change in woody vegetation in NSW since the implementation of the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* and the figures represent annual averages over the two year period.

Category descriptions for woody vegetation change


Cropping, pasture and thinning

 This class includes areas identified as clearing for cropping, pasture and thinning activities. This represents the reduction of canopy cover from above 20% woody canopy cover to substantially less than 20%. Further, small areas of possible clearing have been included for thoroughness, and represent 4% of the total class.


Forestry

 This class includes areas identified as removal of woody canopy due to forest harvesting activities. This includes private native forestry, harvesting within State Forests and harvesting within plantations.

Fire scars

 This class includes areas that had a reduction in canopy cover due to fire related effects. This class does not however capture all historic fire scars, just the ones that had substantial leaf features removed at the time of image acquisition.

Rural and major infrastructure

 This class includes all activities related to rural infrastructure including fence lines and firebreaks, as well as major infrastructure including powerlines, roads and major works. This class includes mine extensions and related activities.

DATA SOURCES

- The analysis techniques are based on Landsat 5 TM and Landsat 7 EM+ Imagery acquired from Australian Centre for Remote Sensing for the periods of September 2003 to April 2004 and from March 2005 to July 2006.

DATA LIMITATIONS & EXCLUSIONS

- The results of the statewide analysis using Landsat 5 TM and Landsat 7 EM+ imagery, have been checked and show a close correlation to known vegetation changes identified using higher resolution SPOT5 imagery undertaken in selected parts of NSW.
- The SLATS methodology provides a clear view of changes in the landscape (above 20% woody canopy cover). Analysis of the output has enabled the change to be classified according to land use (agriculture, forestry, infrastructure) and fire. It does not provide a cause and effect relationship to be drawn between the change in vegetation extent and the conservation/approved clearing activities of CMAs and other agencies.