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## Cyclone Yasi – Impact - Update

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The AMAT forester Simon Penfold was asked to survey the teak estate in Far North Queensland following Cyclone Yasi.

His report is divided into four parts.

### **1. Background**

Cyclone Yasi was the most intense tropical low to cross the Australian coastline in living memory. A category five cyclone with winds to 300 kmph and a front of some 400 kilometres landed at Mission Beach to Cardwell area and proceeded to Georgetown. This track put the cyclone almost directly in the centre of the teak plantations.

### **2. Destruction of this cyclone**

The cyclone did not hit the large commercial or population centres of Cairns or Townsville. Its path did however damage hundreds of buildings and regional infrastructure. In the sector, most companies were affected including the large areas of the Hancocks pine resource, Elders eucalyptus estate, and Rewards teak resource.

### **3. Lowell teak estate**

The full teak estate was inspected during the week of 12 February 2011. Of the forty individual properties, a single summary can be drawn – there is some but relatively little damage to the estate. The damage can be outlined:

- A. Best Management Practises: Pruning and adventitious stem leaves called epicormics leaves will likely be enhanced with the cyclone defoliation of the younger trees. Epicormic development will be large and cause defect to wood quality if not controlled.
- B. Fire Protection: All properties in FNQ and NT have had re-established external firebreaks to a minimum of the local regulatory standards in late 2010. These breaks have now large volumes of cyclone debris including trees from adjacent eucalypt forest. All will need to be removed prior to the fire season in July 2011.
- C. Noxious Weeds: Noxious weed works have been very extensive in this first two months of 2011 and enhanced by the cyclone and associated rains. Over the year to exceed the regulatory requirements of the Queensland governments; requiring additional works.
- D. Soil Erosion: No soil erosion concerns have been featured in the NQ estate. No new budget is expected for these works.

#### **4. Budget implications for 2010/11**

- Although enormous regional damage occurred by Cyclone Yasi, Lowell had less than 15% of the total estate affected;
- Of the affected estate most was to stems of co-dominant and suppressed form; likely to be candidate trees for first thinning removal only; &
- Some rescheduling of expenditure is necessary given the damage and need to ensure track repairs before the summer season. This expenditure is likely to be of the order of \$100,000.

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