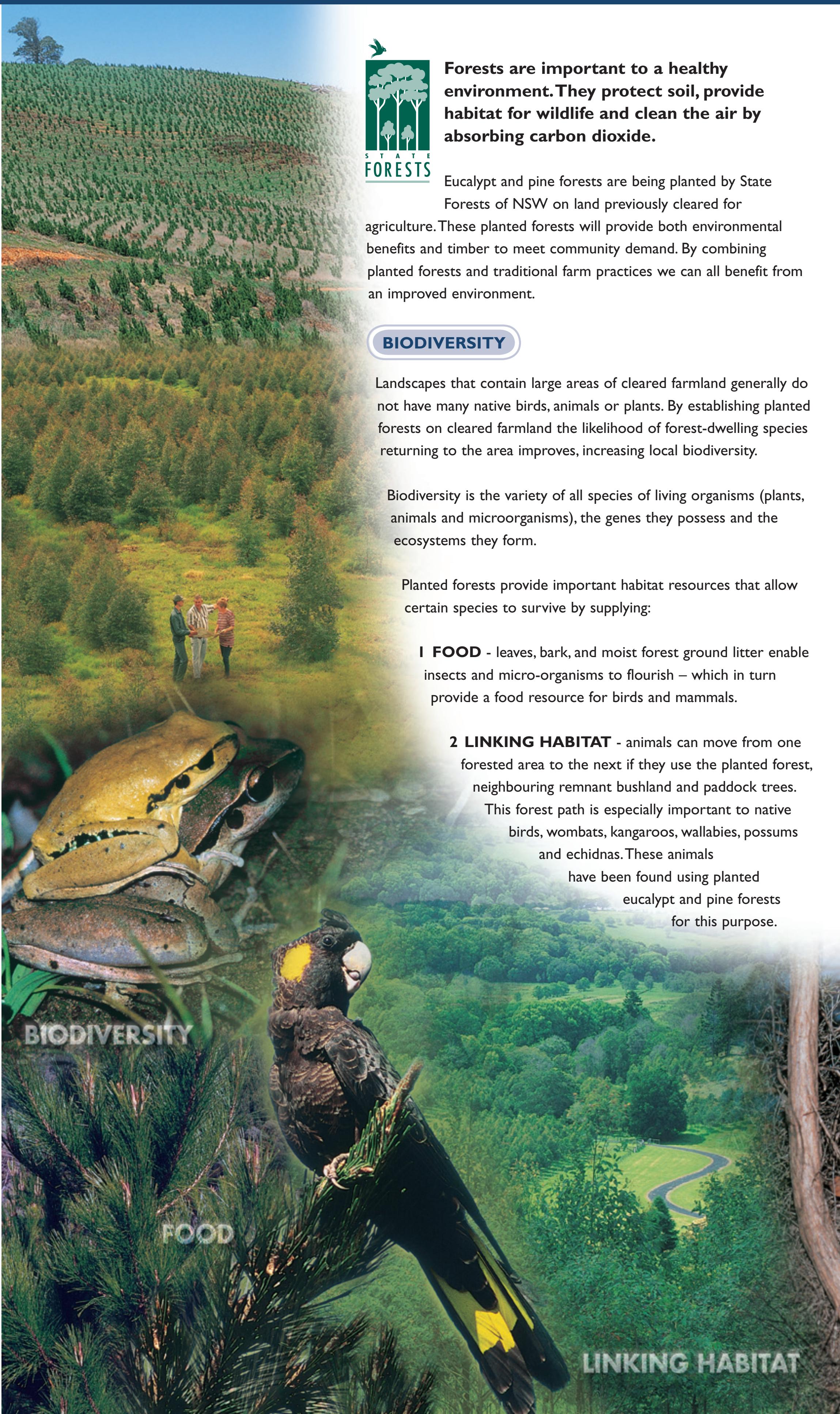


# How planted forests help the environment



**Forests are important to a healthy environment. They protect soil, provide habitat for wildlife and clean the air by absorbing carbon dioxide.**

Eucalypt and pine forests are being planted by State Forests of NSW on land previously cleared for agriculture. These planted forests will provide both environmental benefits and timber to meet community demand. By combining planted forests and traditional farm practices we can all benefit from an improved environment.

## BIODIVERSITY

Landscapes that contain large areas of cleared farmland generally do not have many native birds, animals or plants. By establishing planted forests on cleared farmland the likelihood of forest-dwelling species returning to the area improves, increasing local biodiversity.

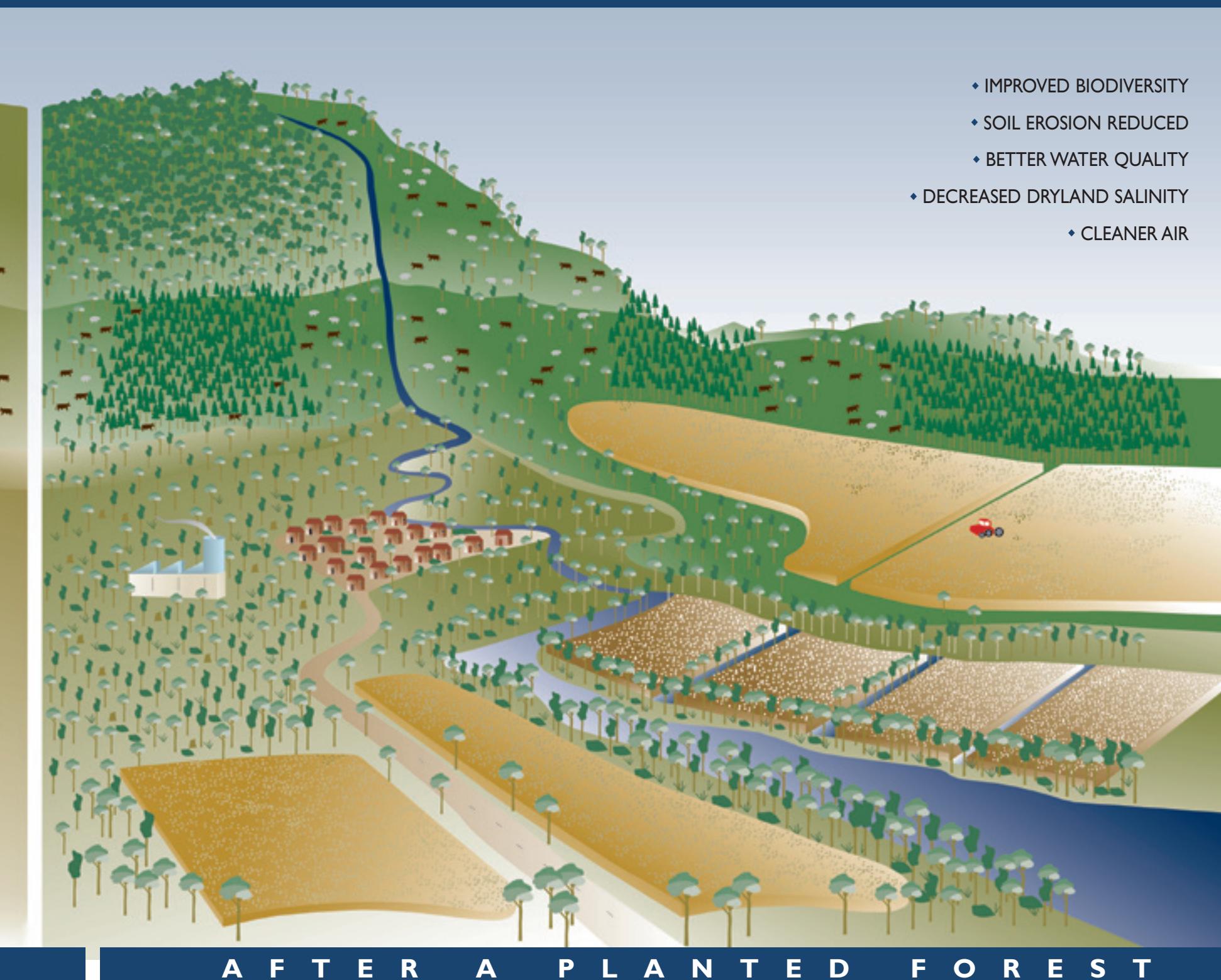
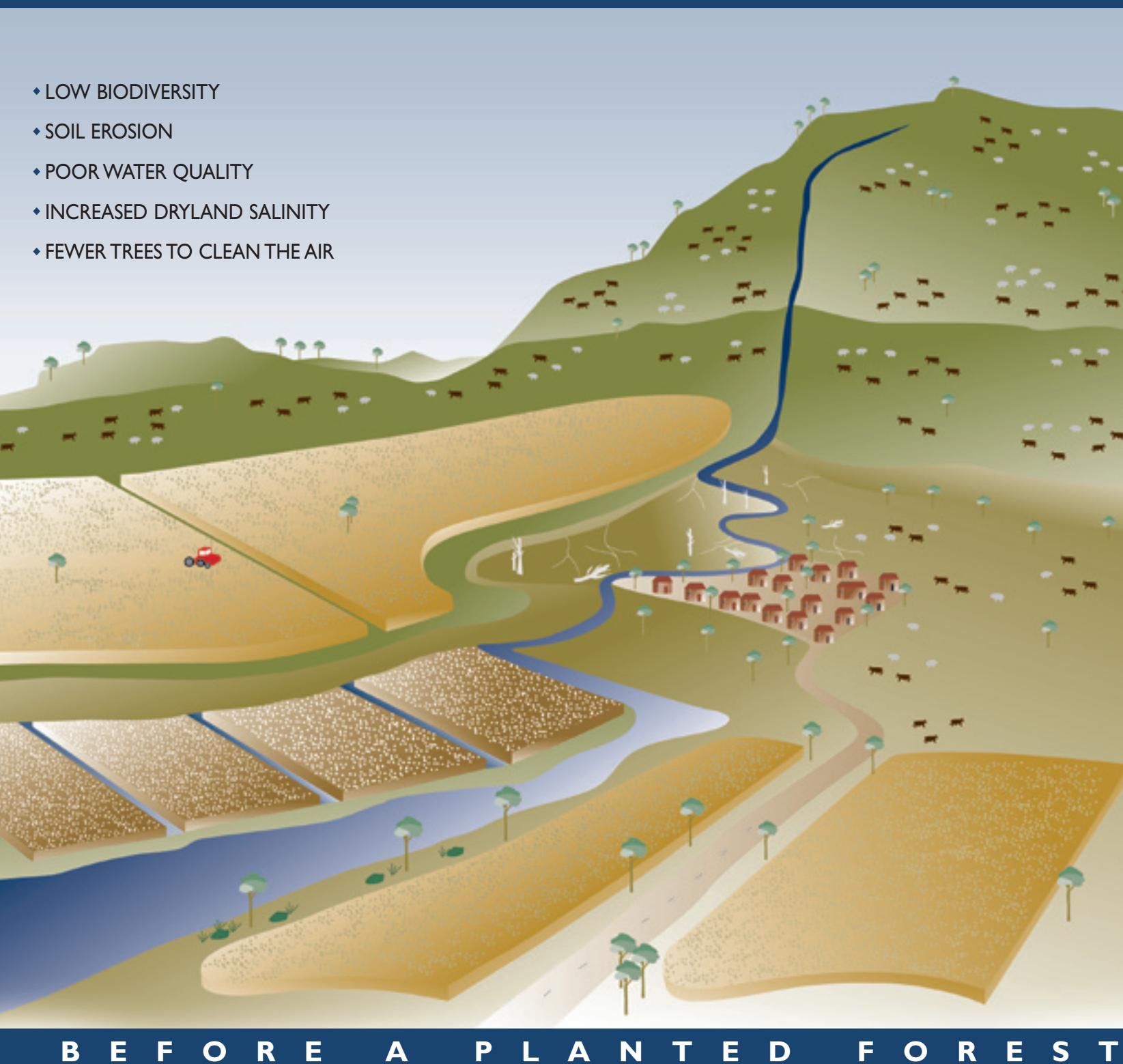
Biodiversity is the variety of all species of living organisms (plants, animals and microorganisms), the genes they possess and the ecosystems they form.

Planted forests provide important habitat resources that allow certain species to survive by supplying:

**1 FOOD** - leaves, bark, and moist forest ground litter enable insects and micro-organisms to flourish – which in turn provide a food resource for birds and mammals.

**2 LINKING HABITAT** - animals can move from one forested area to the next if they use the planted forest, neighbouring remnant bushland and paddock trees.

This forest path is especially important to native birds, wombats, kangaroos, wallabies, possums and echidnas. These animals have been found using planted eucalypt and pine forests for this purpose.



**3 SHELTER** - the planted forest provides habitat for animals to use as shelter and also supplies materials for building nests and other homes. For aquatic animals, the increased tree coverage of a planted forest improves water quality and lowers the water temperature, improving habitat for frogs and fish.

## CLEAN AIR

Planted forests absorb carbon dioxide emissions from the atmosphere. Trees use the carbon to make sugar, starch and complex molecules like cellulose and lignin – forming wood, branches, roots, leaves and bark. About half a tree's dry weight is carbon. If a forest is planted on cleared grazing land the growing

trees dramatically increase the total carbon stored on the land. State Forests is planting forests to offset greenhouse gas emissions. These planted forests act as carbon sinks. State Forests is working with landowners to grow trees on their properties to expand our planted forests, generate future timber and provide carbon sinks.

## TIMBER

Timber and other wood products store the carbon dioxide they absorbed when they were growing trees. The carbon stored in these trees will not release even when a tree has been harvested and processed into timber products. Timber is a natural, environmental product because it takes less energy to produce than other products and is a

renewable resource. Establishing planted forests helps to generate a future timber resource.

## SALINITY CONTROL

The major cause of dryland salinity is the progressive removal of native tree cover from upper areas of water catchments. Tree removal leads to higher volumes of water soaking into water tables. This has caused water tables to rise, bringing naturally occurring salt from deep within the soil to the surface. Once in the surface soils, the salt also washes into water-courses increasing the salt content in rivers and streams. Forests planted in the upper areas of water catchments can improve water quality and lower water tables.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

visit our website [www.forest.nsw.gov.au](http://www.forest.nsw.gov.au) or phone State Forests Information Centre on **1300 655 687** or **(02) 9871 3377** to find out about:

- ◆ salinity control using planted forests
- ◆ eucalypt or pine planted forests on your property
- ◆ soil & water quality in forests
- ◆ carbon credits
- ◆ biodiversity in forests

