



Helping communities with best practice for logging in the Solomon Islands

A summary of the Code of Logging Practice



SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT



SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

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Definitions

Buffer: A natural barrier that protects resources, such as freshwater rivers and fish in a lagoon, from human activities such as farming or logging. One example is a forest on a riverbank. The roots of the trees hold soil in place when it rains. This keeps the water cleaner by reducing the amount of soil that flows into the river.

Ecosystem Service: The benefits that nature provides to humans. For example, forests provide food, timber, fuel and fibre; they regulate climate, foods and water quality; and they provide recreational, aesthetic and spiritual benefits.

Enforcement Officer: A person that can enforce the law. Includes the Commissioner of Forest Resources, Forest Officers, Police Officers and Enforcement Officers appointed under the Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act. These officers have the power to search and arrest persons they suspect have breached the Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act and may also enter any customary land to exercise their powers.

Gully: Drainage in which water flows for less than 6 months in a year.

Landing: Area where logs are stored before being transported to a log pond.

Log Pond: Area that is the main storage area for storing logs awaiting transport, often located on the shoreline.

Stream: Small river in which water flows for at least 6 months in a year.

Tambu Place: Site of social, cultural, historical, spiritual or archaeological significance.

Timber: Includes trees when they have fallen or been felled, and all wood whether cut up or fashioned or hollowed out for any purpose or not.

Protected trees: Ironwood, Rosewood, Ebony, Kauri, Nali Nuts, all edible fruit trees; and any other timber tree declared by the Solomon Islands Government to be protected. Land owners can identify plants and tree species of significance that are to be protected.

Tree: includes any root, stump, stem, branch, brushwood, young tree or sapling.

Laws of the Forest

There are laws which regulate the timber industry in the Solomon Islands. These laws aim to reduce some of the environmental and social impacts that can result from logging. They can also make the timber industry more sustainable, by ensuring some of the logged areas are restored and lost vegetation is replanted.

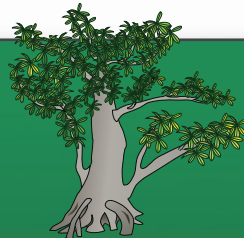
This booklet aims to summarise some of these regulations, including some important aspects of the Code of Logging Practice, and is intended to help communities and logging companies to have a clear overview of the regulations that protect communities and the environment. The Standard Logging Agreement should include the conditions of the Code of Practice.

There are three main sections for you to read:



1. Excluded and protected areas

Areas where logging is not permitted



2. Protected trees

Tree species that are protected by law and cannot be logged



3. Rehabilitation

Activities that logging companies must complete when logging is finished

Before logging can legally take place, there is a process that must be followed and assessments that must be completed. To learn more about these, please refer to the following publications:

- *The Timber Rights Acquisition Process for Landowners*
- *Environmental Impact Assessment*
- *Solomon Islands Code of Logging Practice*



Protecting communities and nature

The Solomon Islands Code of Logging Practice defines areas where logging must not occur. Areas such as villages, gardens, rivers, high mountains, beaches, lakes, tambu sites and other places that are important to communities are protected by the Code.

Having a healthy environment around communities provides a reliable supply of freshwater, crops, fish and other natural resources. These are called 'ecosystem services' and the Code include rules that help to protect them. **The diagram below shows some of these areas that are protected from logging by law.**

Tambu areas



Rivers and lakes

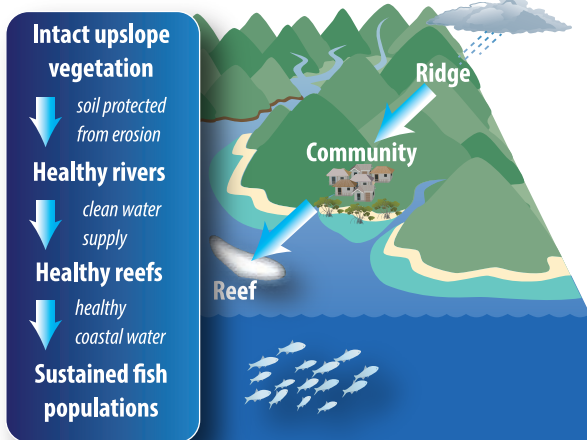


Coastlines and fisheries



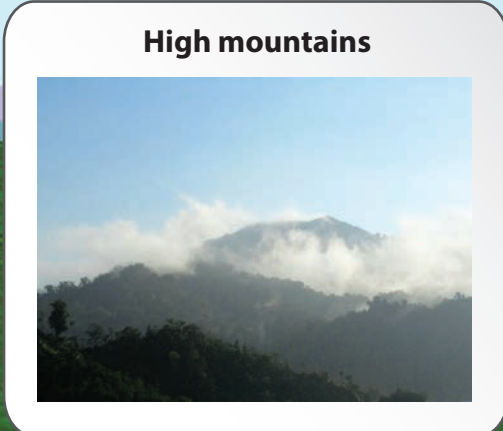
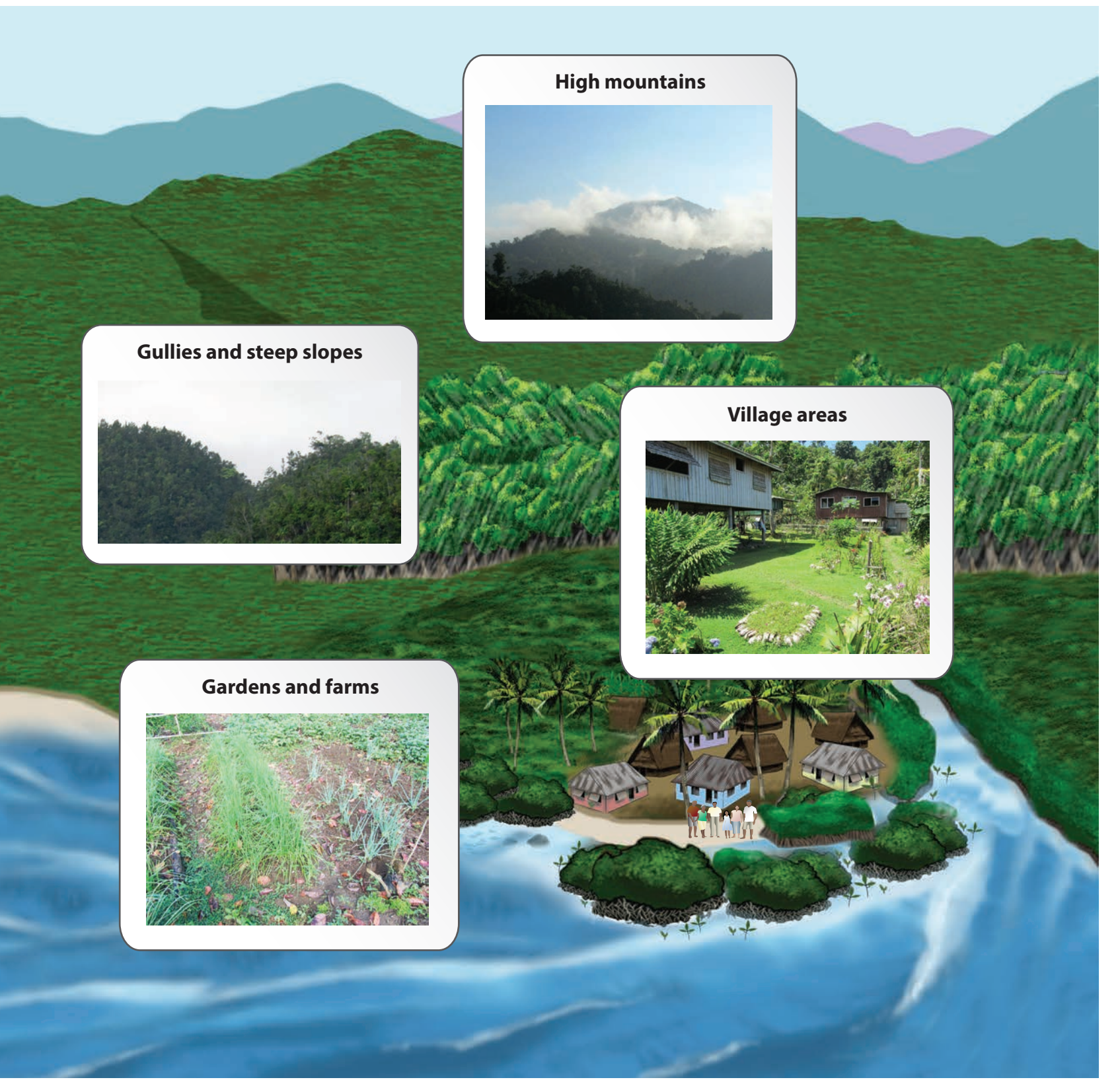
Areas of ecological importance





The mountains, coastline and reefs are all connected. Protecting one area also makes the other environments stronger.

For example, steep slopes in the Solomon Islands are often stabilised by deep rooted vegetation in forests. The forest is a natural buffer that protects communities from flooding and landslides and also ensures that reefs are healthy by reducing the impact of sediment flows from erosion.

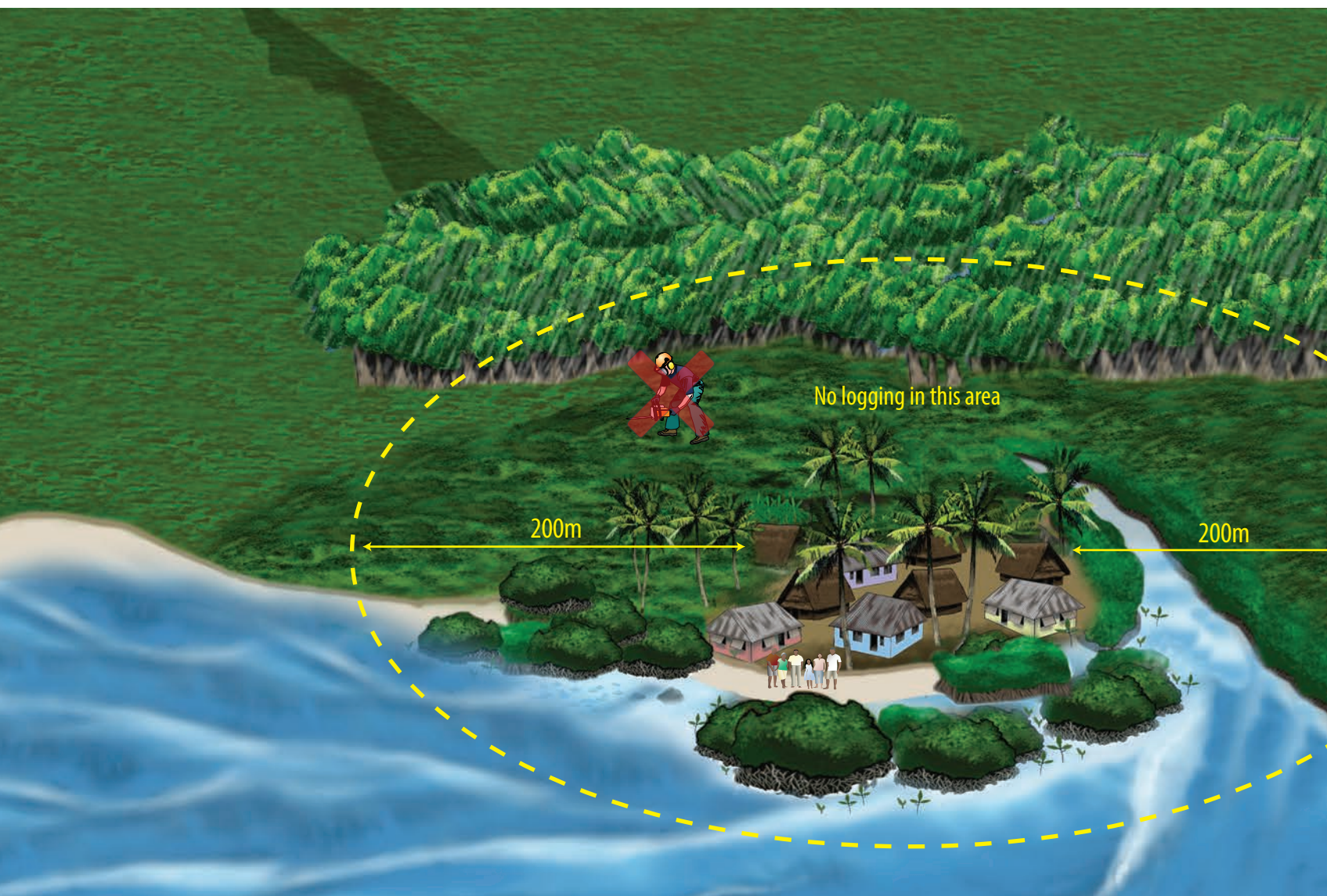




Areas Where Logging Is Not Permitted

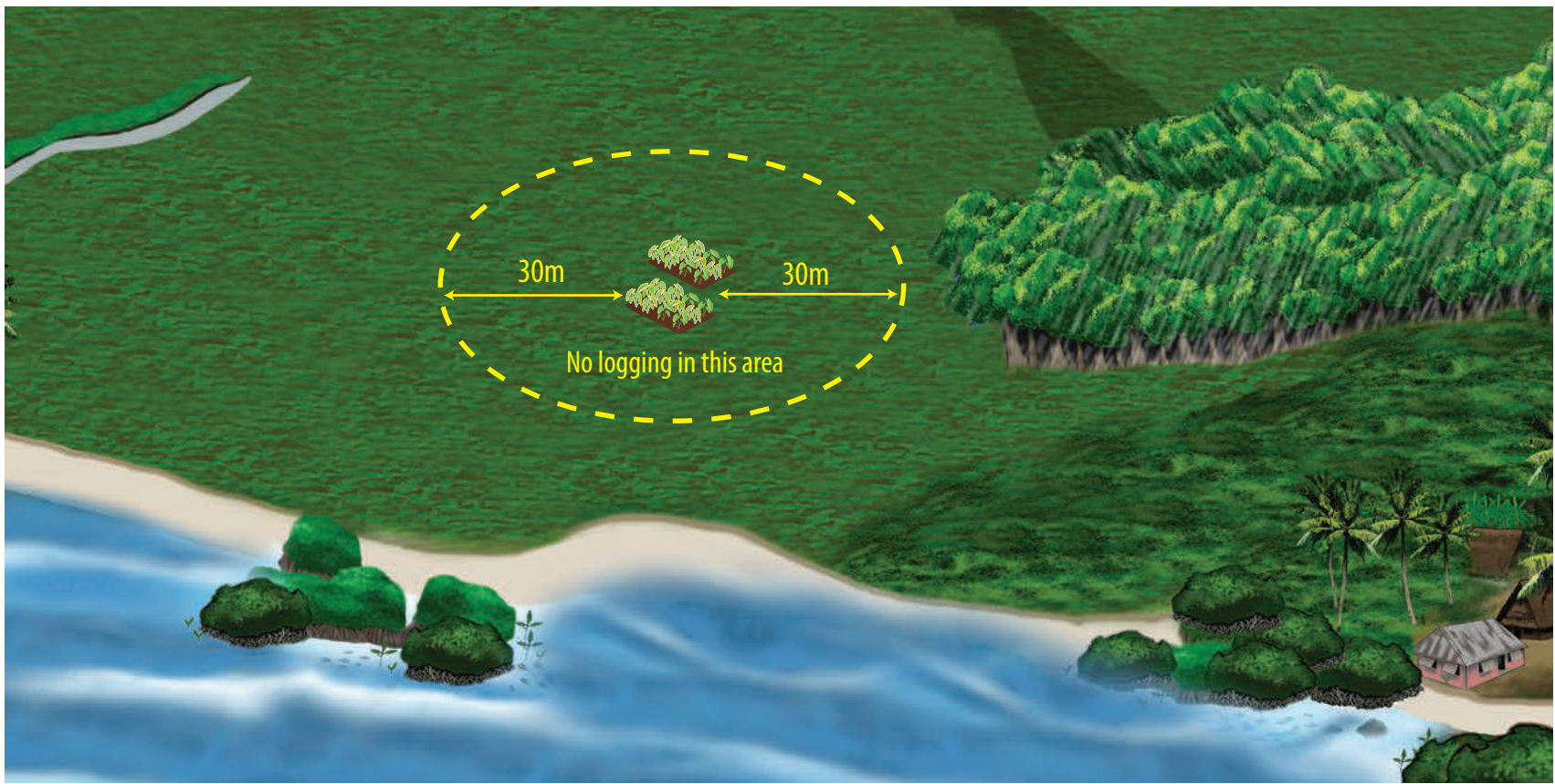
The Solomon Islands Code of Logging Practice defines areas where logging must not occur. In addition, logging must not be taken place in any other area that is not approved by the landowners, or in State Forests, Forest Reserves or Protected Areas (which are declared as conservation areas under national legislation).

The following diagrams show these excluded areas outlined in yellow:



1. Villages

For villages, the local community must be allowed to decide on buffer widths. If a different width is identified, the Forestry Department must be notified in writing and may check that the decision is agreed to by all parties. Otherwise the minimum width of 200m is applied.



2. Gardens and farms

For garden areas, the local community must be allowed to decide on buffer widths. The minimum width is 30m. If a different width is identified, the Forestry Department must be notified in writing and may check that the decision is agreed to be all parties.



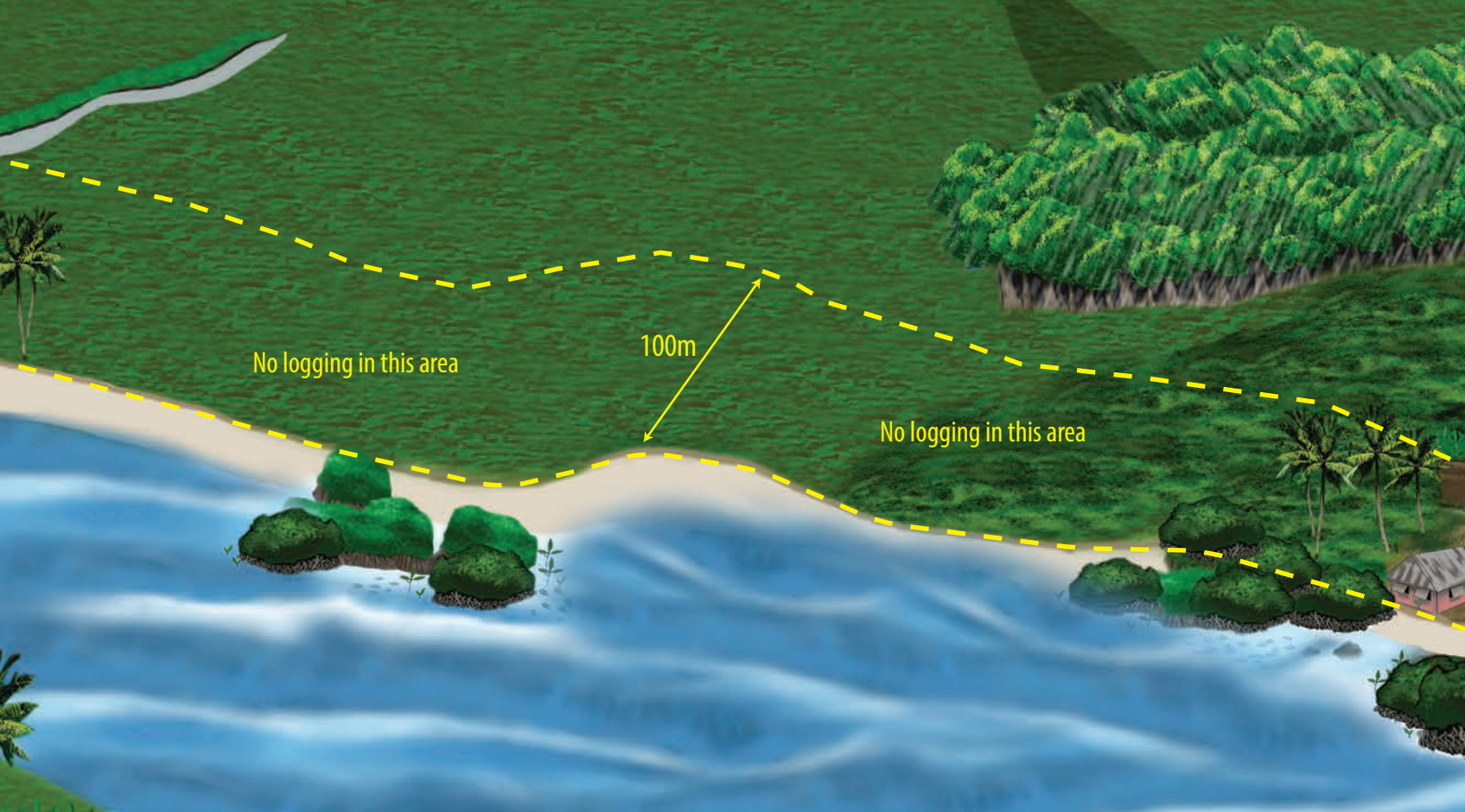


3. Tambu areas

Under the Code of Logging Practice, sites of social, cultural, historical, spiritual or archaeological significance are listed as Tambu areas.

For Tambu areas, the local community must be allowed to decide on buffer widths. If a different width is identified, the Forestry Department must be notified in writing and may check that the decision is agreed to be all parties. Otherwise the minimum width of 30m is applied. Resource owners have a responsibility to mark these areas.

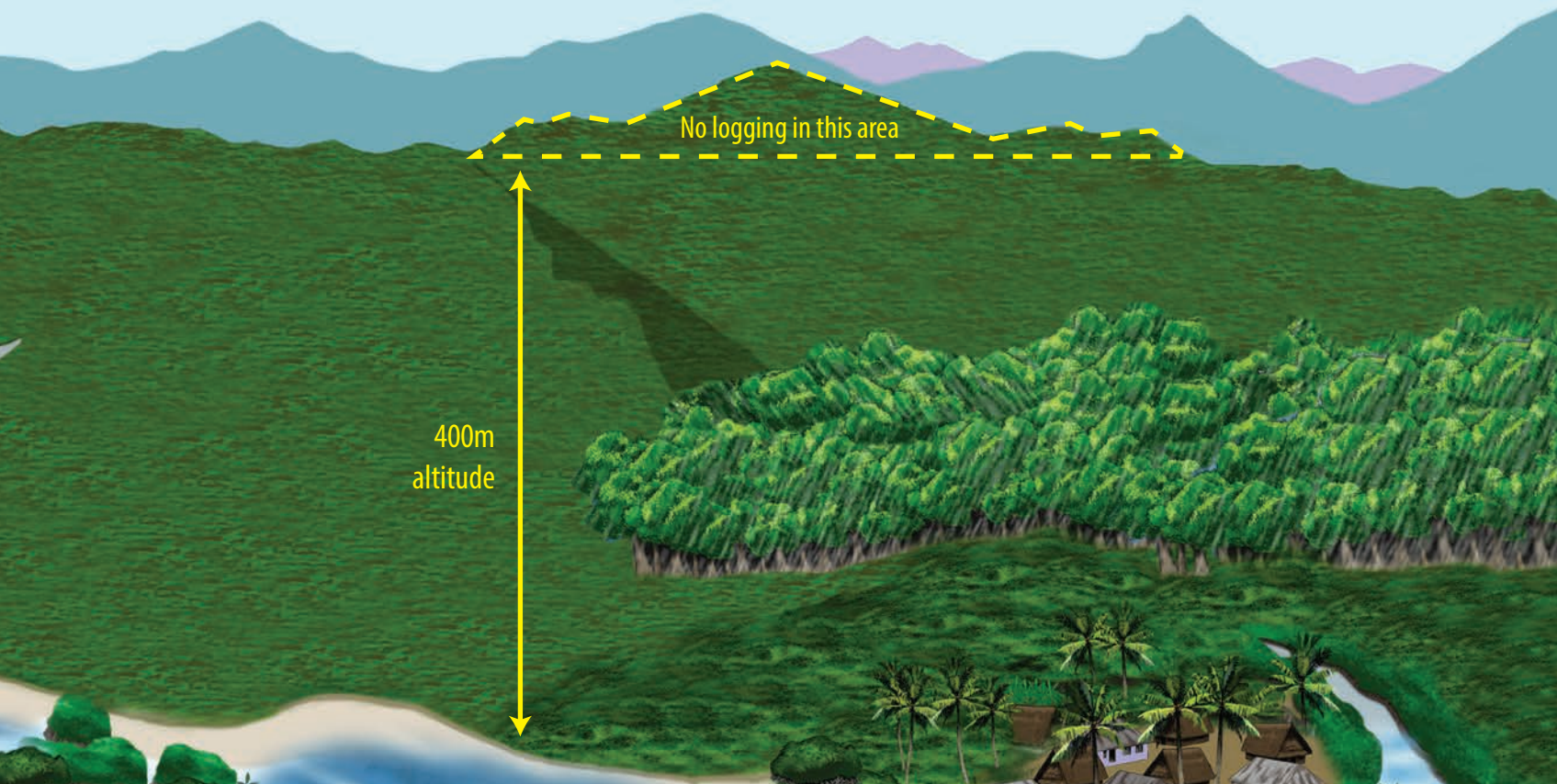




4. Oceans, lagoons and lakes

The minimum buffer between oceans, lagoons and lakes and logging operations is 100m. The buffer starts from the high water (high tide) mark. At log ponds, the buffer zone may be reduced to 50m.

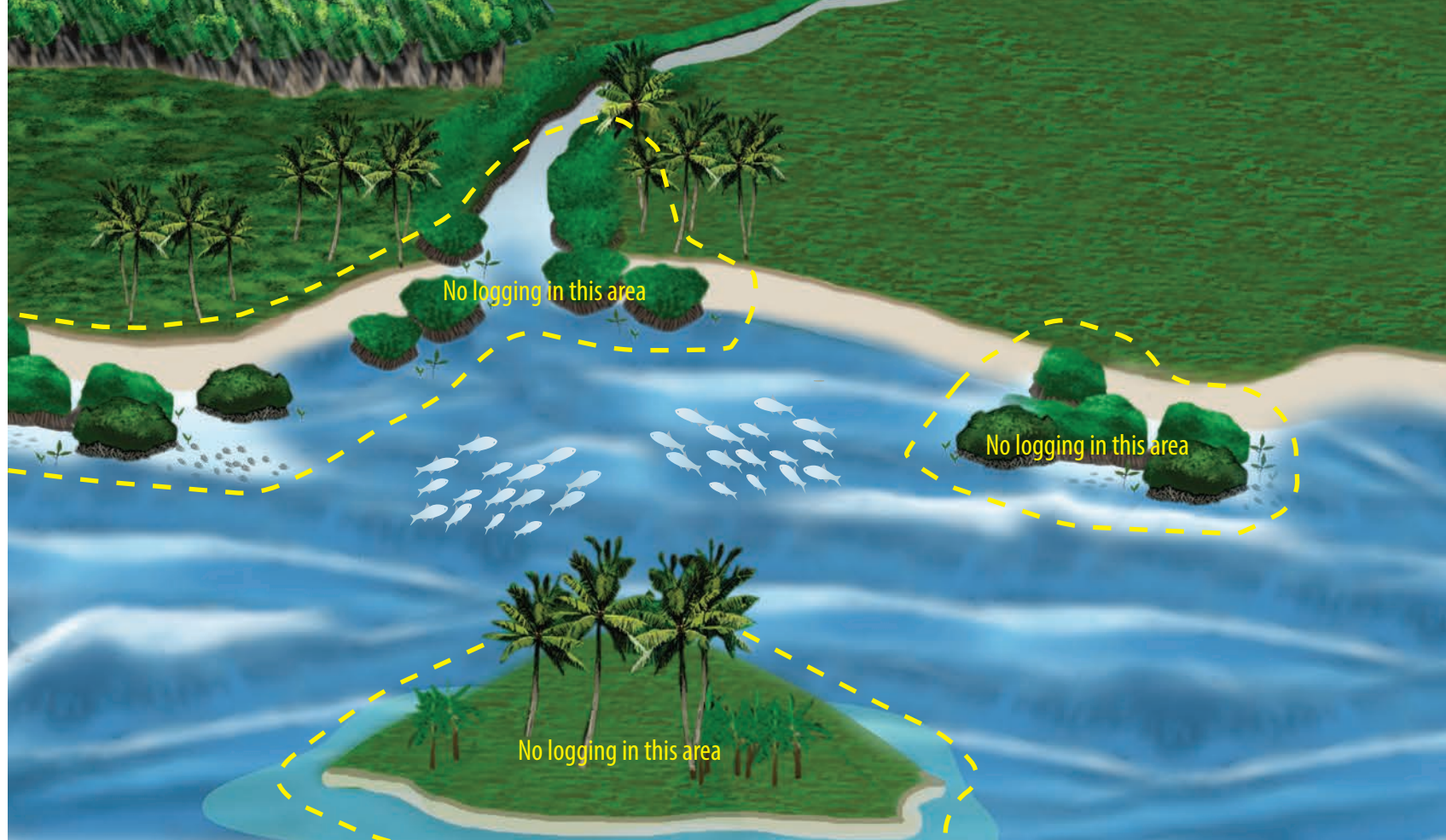




5. Mountains and high altitude areas

All areas above 400m altitude are protected and cannot be logged, unless there is a specific approval issued by the Commissioner of Forests.





6. Areas of ecological or scientific importance

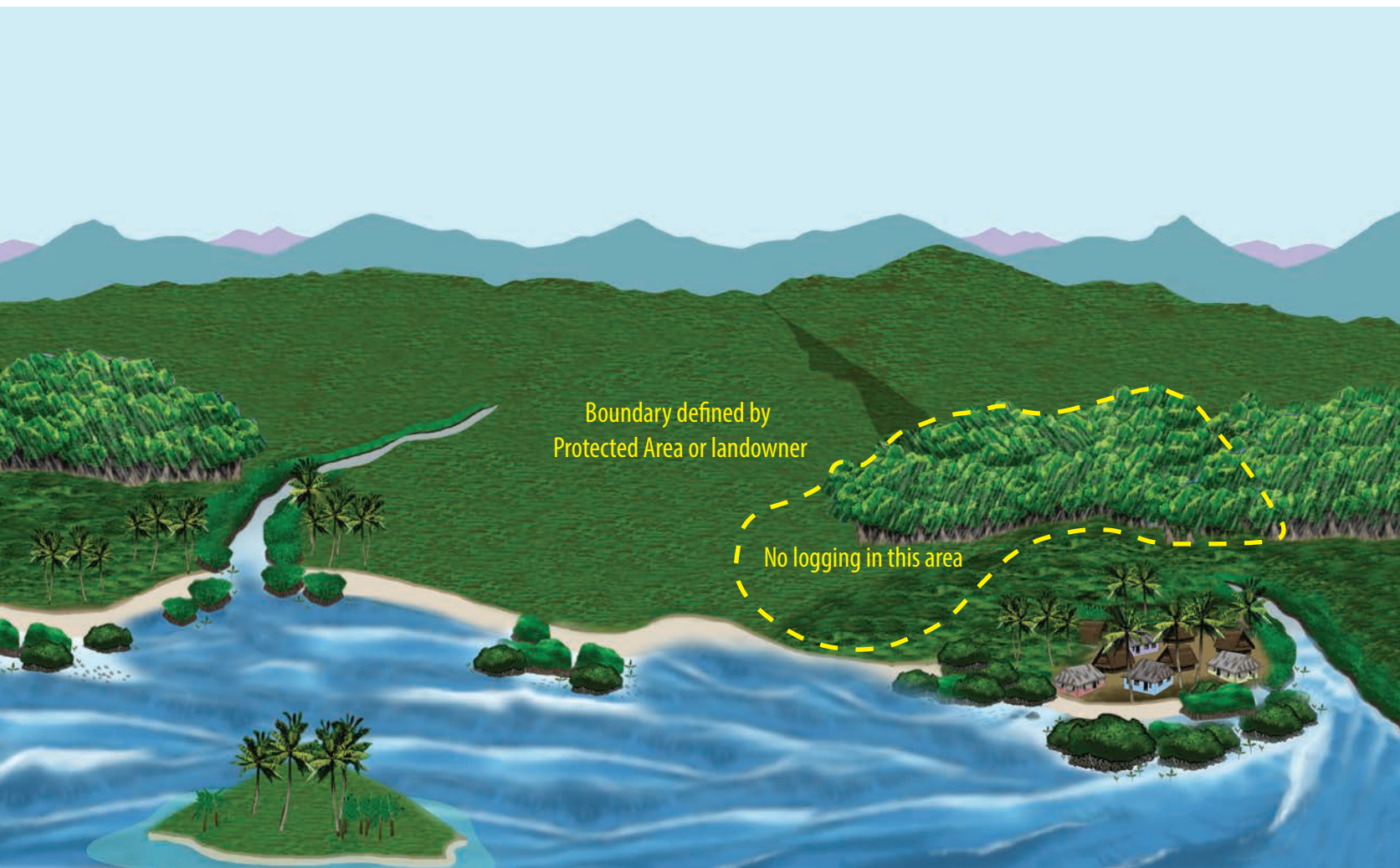
Areas of ecological or scientific importance cannot be logged. These areas are vital for the protection of important marine resources. They include:

- Outer reef and lagoon islands
- Wetlands
- Swamps
- Mangroves



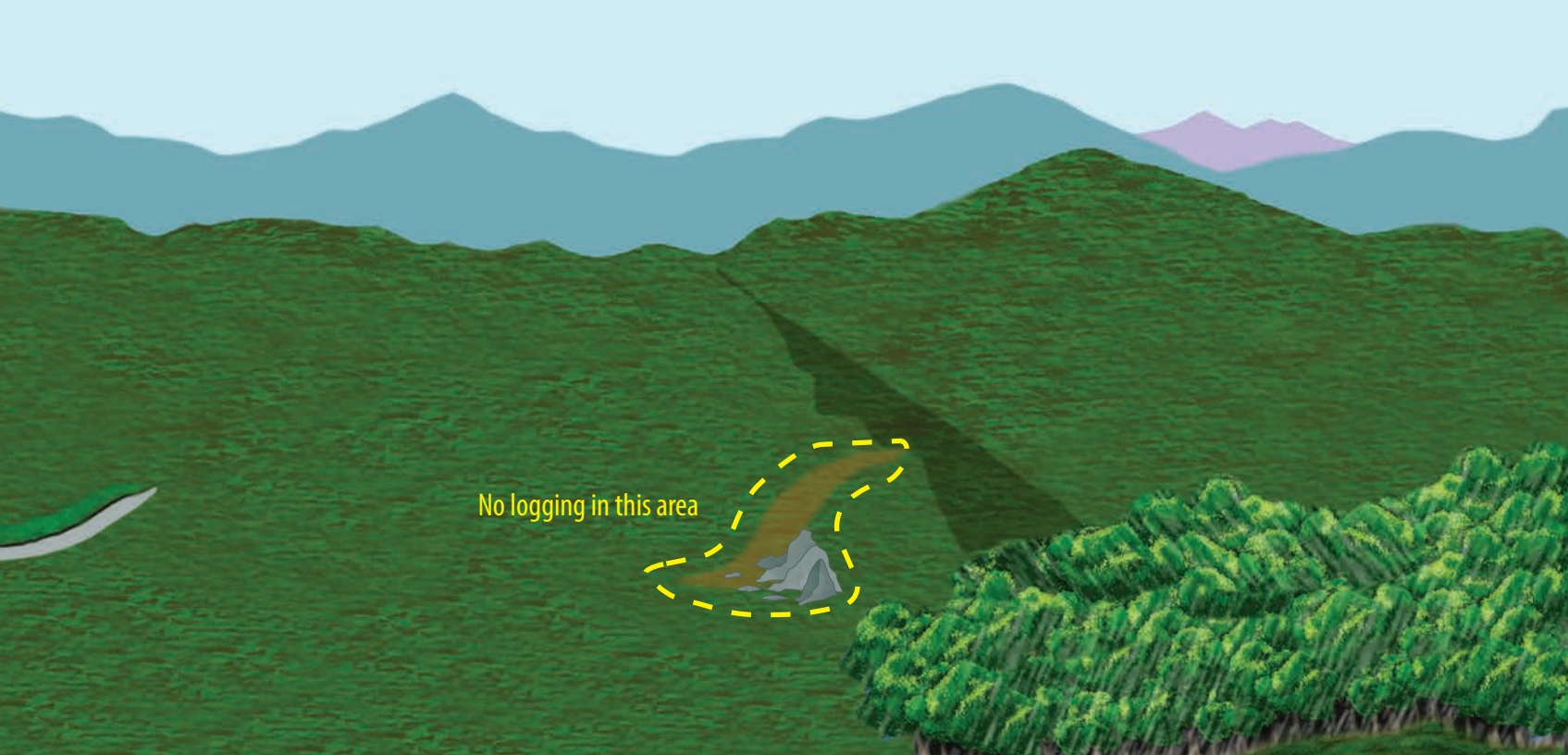
6. Protected areas and forest reserves

Protected Areas as places that are protected under National or Provincial legislation. At the National level, the Protected Areas Act gives the Minister of Environment the mandate to declare land or sea area as protected areas. At the Provincial level, places can be protected by an Ordinance. Forest reserves can be protected under the Forest Act.



7. Landowner protected areas

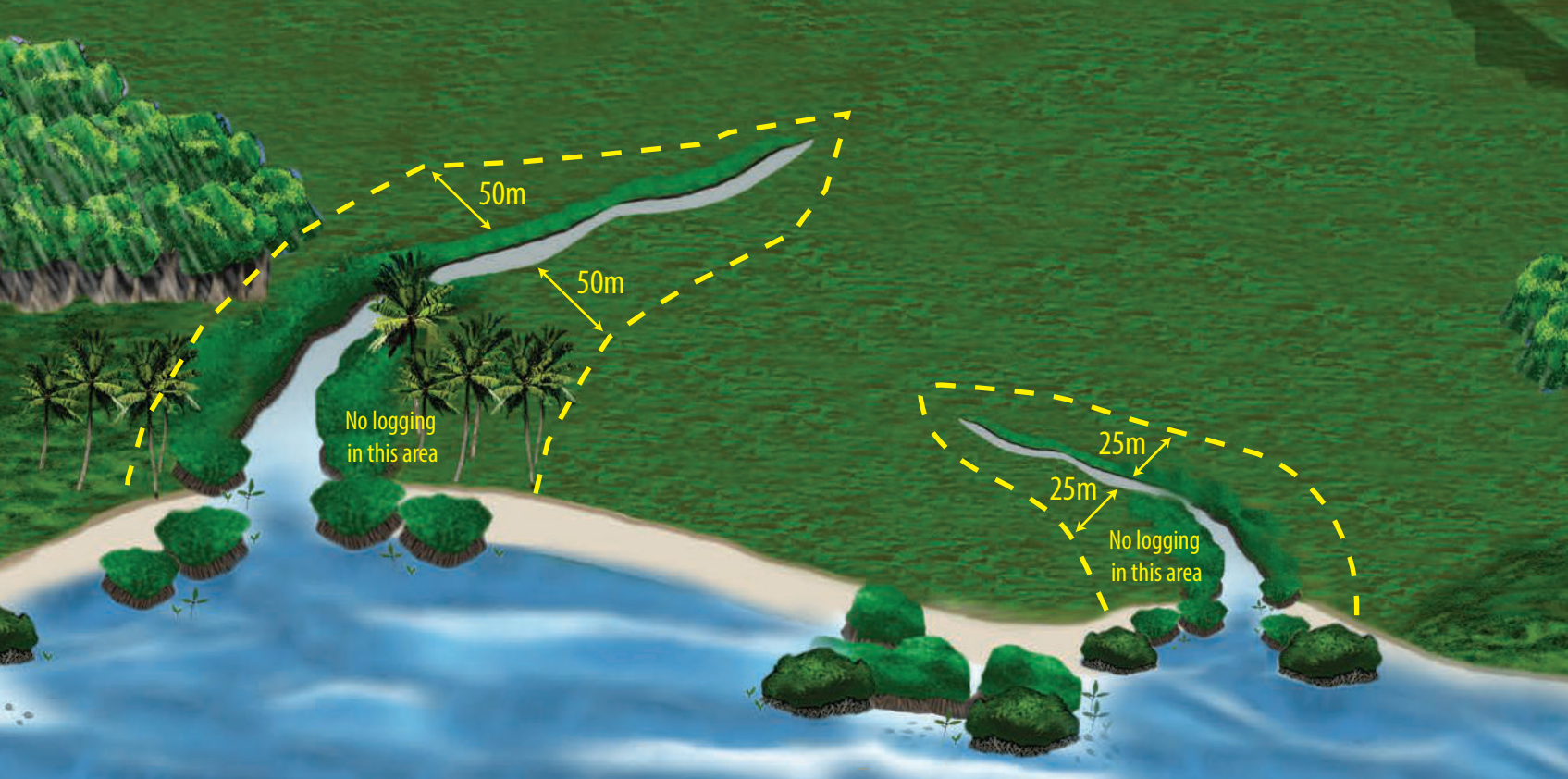
Areas that the landowner does not wish to log for any reason are also protected. These areas must be identified before logging commences. Please see the *Timber Rights Acquisition Process for Landowners* for more information.



8. Landslip areas

Logging is not permitted where landslips have taken place in order to prevent further erosion. The excluded area includes the landslide itself and where any soil or rocks have spilled.



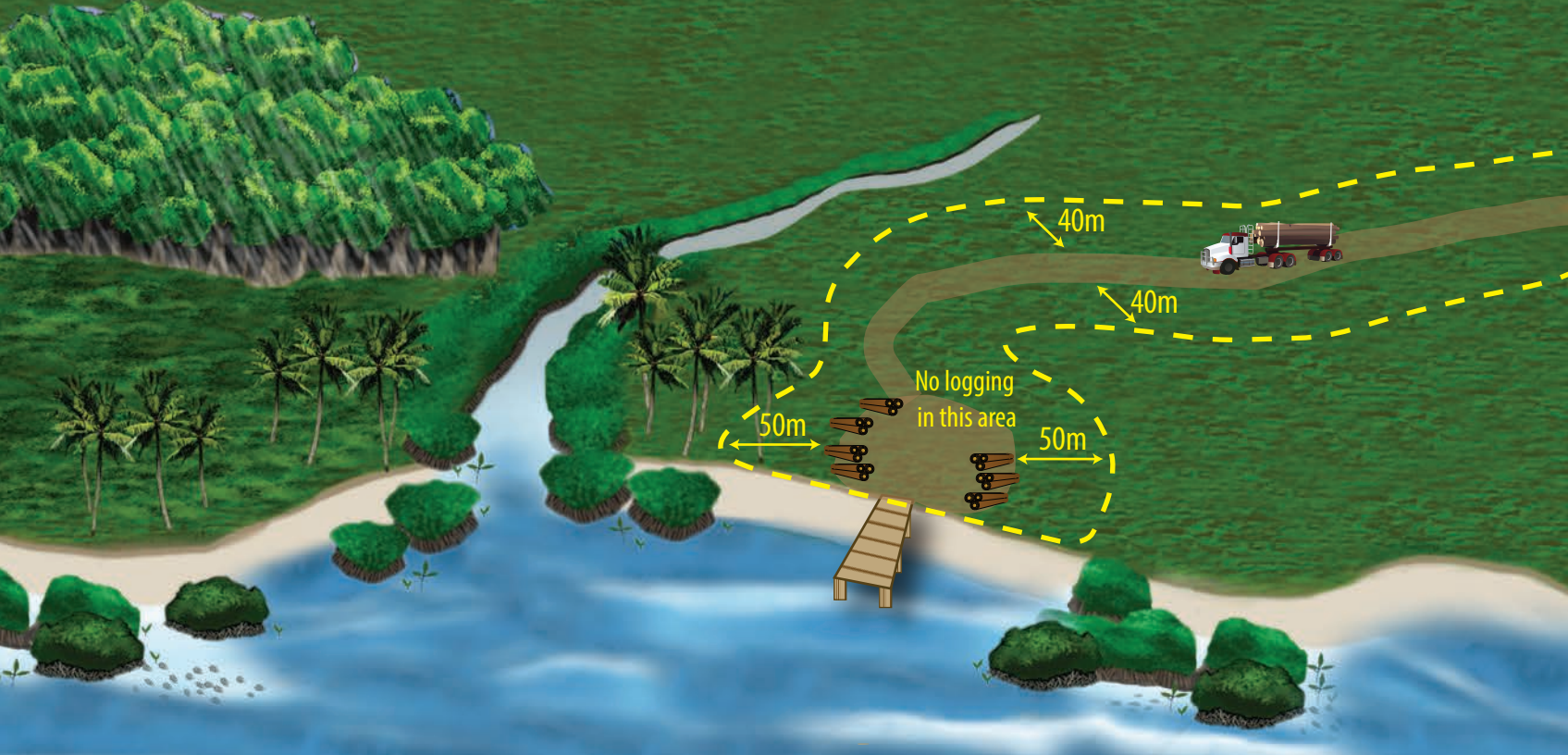


9. Rivers and streams

Riverside forest is vital for protecting water supply. Logging is not permitted within:

- 50 meters of a stream that is greater than 10 metres wide
- 25 meters of a stream that is less than 10 meters wide



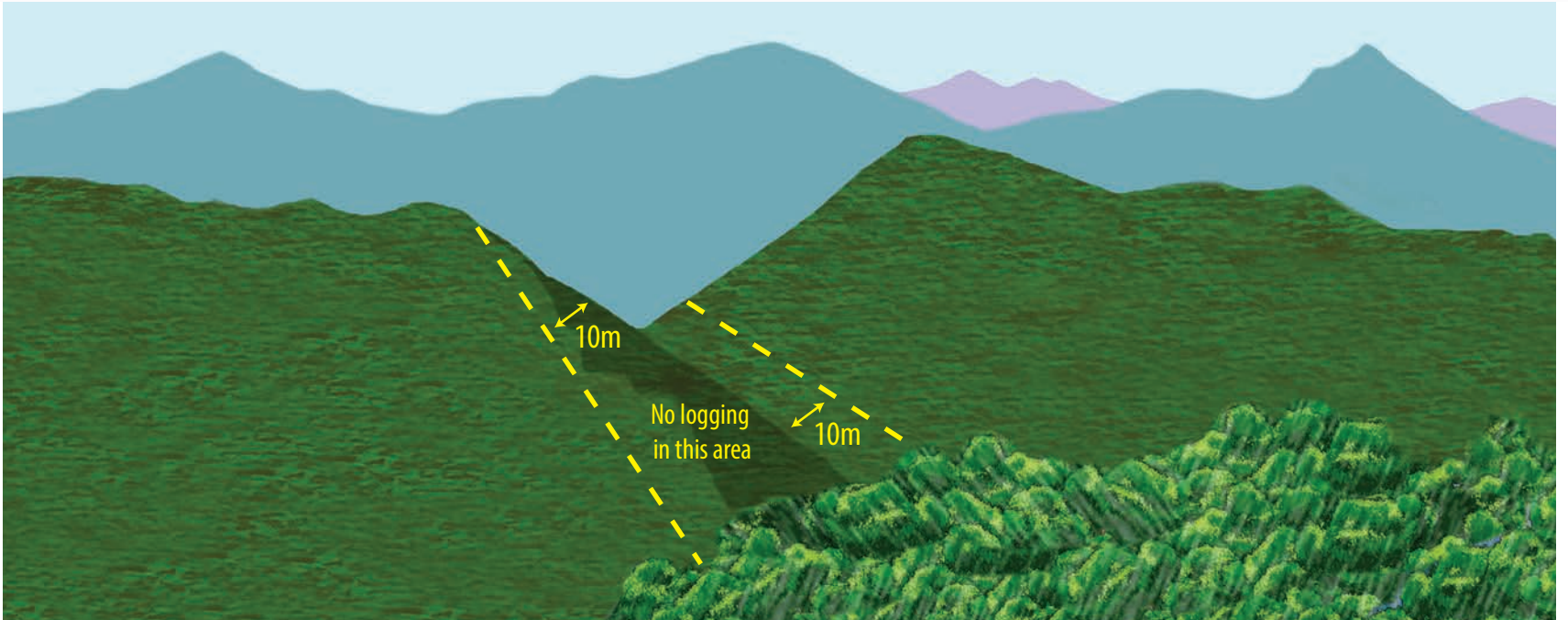


10. Log ponds and roads

Log ponds are the storage area for storing logs awaiting transport, they are often located on the shoreline. Logging is not permitted within:

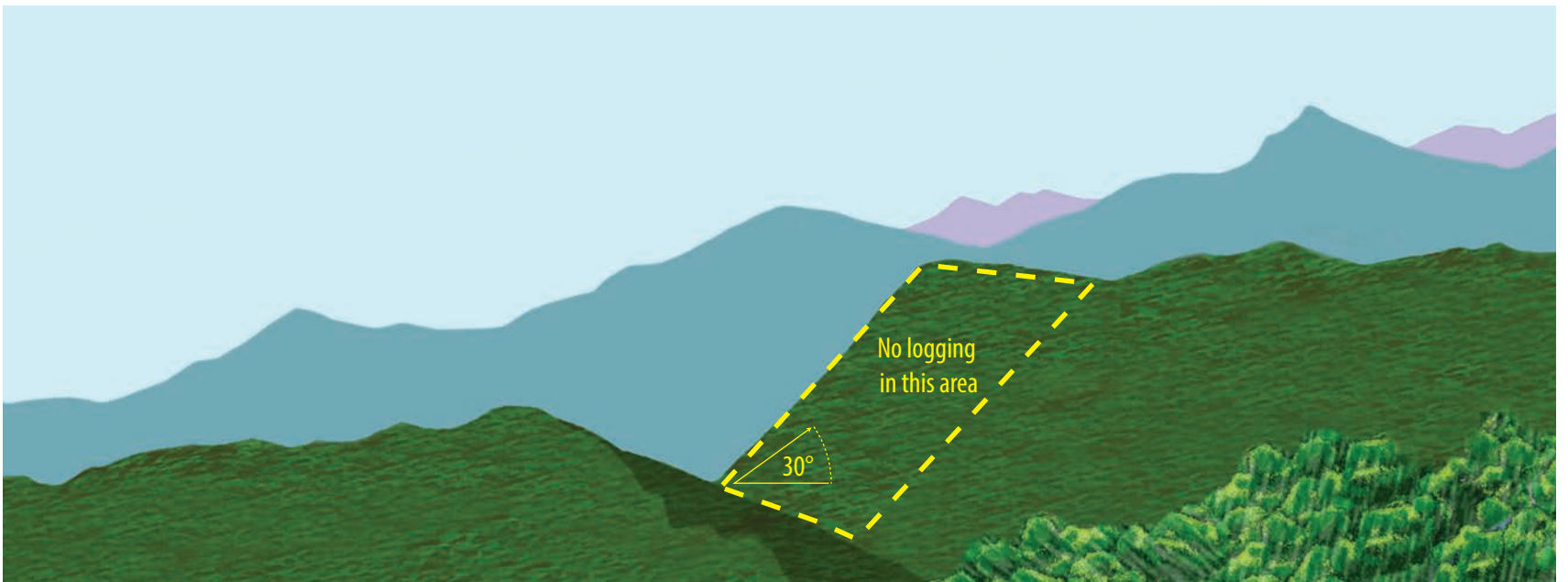
- 50 meters of a long pond
- 40 meters of a road





11. Gullies

A gully is a drainage in which water flows for less than 6 months in a year. Gullies are often located at the bottom of a slope between two hills. Logging is not permitted within 10m of a gully.



12. Steep slopes

Slopes steeper than 30° are defined as being too steep for logging to safely take place. Logging is not permitted on these slopes.

Protected Trees

The Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act identifies several tree species and types that are protected under law. The Minister can also declare other tree species be protected for the conservation of timber producing trees in Solomon Islands.

The following trees cannot be logged for export purposes:

All edible fruit trees



Ebony (*Xanthostemon melanoxylon*)

Solomon Island names: Rie (Choiseul) or Tubi (Isabel)



Rosewood (*Pterocarpus indicus*)

Solomon Island names: Varara, Ara, Liki, Linggi or Rinngi



Kauri (*Agathis macrophylla*)

Solomon Island names: Santa Cruz Kauri



Ngali Nut (*Canarium indicum*)

Solomon Island names: Ngali (Kwara"ae), Kaku, Okete



Rehabilitation

There are activities that logging companies must complete when logging operations are complete. These are specified in the Code of Logging Practice and include:

Decommissioning landings and log ponds

- 1 Remove from the log pond and adjacent forested land any excess bark or waste;
- 2 Rip the surface of the log pond to a depth of at least 60 centimetres;
- 3 Return topsoil removed during construction of the log pond and spread evenly across the ripped surface of the log pond;
- 4 Ensure that the log pond is effectively drained;
- 5 Replant the whole or part of the log pond as required by the forest officer who inspects the landing.



Decommissioning skid tracks

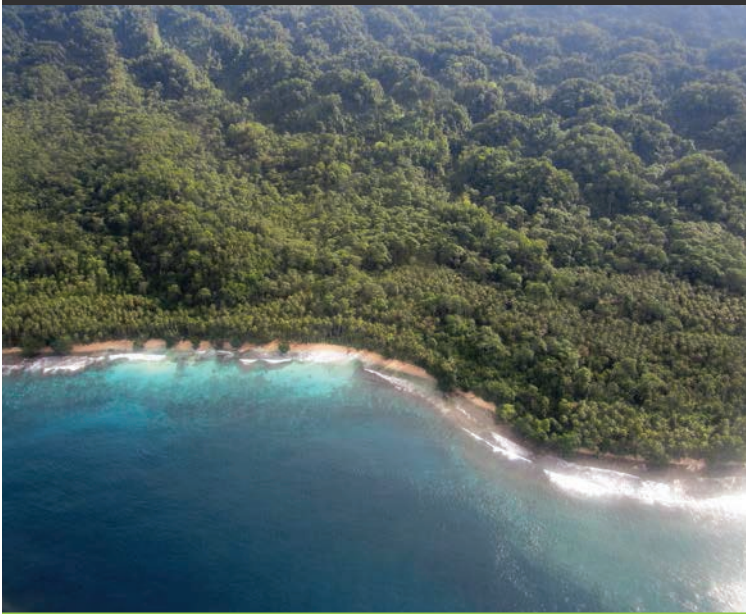
Drainage must be dug into skid tracks when they are no longer in use. 'Whoa boys' are drains with a higher wall on the down-slope side. They allow water to flow off the track. This reduces the risks of erosion and flooding. The drains should be dug on an angle slightly down hill. They must direct the water from the track and onto a stable and forested area.



They should at least 50cm high and be placed:

- every 40m on a slope (less than 10°)
- every 20m on a steep slope (over 10°)

Note: A supplementary agreement can include replanting in the forest area where logging took place. In Choiseul Province, a supplementary agreement for log pond and landing rehabilitation is compulsory.



**This publication only serves as a guide.
For more detailed information, please contact:**

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