

The following has been released in relation to a request for information relating to Future Potential Production Forest land

Minister for Primary Industries and Water
Minister for Energy
Minister for Resources
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Level 5, 4 Salamanca Place HOBART TAS 7000 Australia
GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Australia
Phone: +61 3 6165 7678
Email: guy.barnett@dpac.tas.gov.au



1 June 2020

Mr Andrew Wilkie
Email: Andrew.Wilkie.MP@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Wilkie

Thank you for your email to the Premier on the 5 May 2020 regarding managing Tasmania's Future Potential Production Forests (FPPF) land. As the Minister for Resources I am replying on behalf of Government.

Contrary to politically motivated claims from the Greens, the FPPF land was not opened up for harvest from 8 April 2020. The Tasmanian Liberal Government has stated this on multiple occasions.

The Forestry (Rebuilding the Forestry Industry) Act 2014 outlines the specific process to allow for the exchange or conversion of FPPF land to Permanent Timber Production Zone land (PTPZ). Any request for exchange or conversion is required to undergo stringent assessment and must be accepted by both Houses of Parliament.

There have been no applications made to date.

The Government continues to engage with the industry about the FPPF Wood Bank, and has no immediate plans to convert any FPPF Land to production forest.

The Tasmanian Government recognises our forestry industry as a cornerstone of the Tasmanian economy, employing thousands of locals and injecting more than \$1.2 billion into our economy, while supporting regional communities and families. For more information on Tasmania's sustainable forestry management practices, please visit the Department of State Growth website https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/energy_and_resources/forestry

I would like to thank you for bringing these matters to the government's attention and I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Resources

Minister for Primary Industries and Water
Minister for Energy
Minister for Resources
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22 May 2020

s 36 - personal

Email: s 36 - personal

Dear s 36 - personal

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 2020 regarding native forests and Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) Land. As the Minister for Resources, I am responding on behalf of the Government.

Tasmania has a strong and comprehensive Forest Management System that delivers ecologically sustainable forest management. A key component of this is our CAR (comprehensive, adequate and representative) Reserve System - half of Tasmania's forests are formally protected in reserves, including more than one million hectares, or 85 per cent, of Tasmania's old growth forests.

Less than half (46 per cent) of Tasmania's Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ), set aside for sustainable forestry by the then Tasmanian Parliament through the Forest Management Act 2013, contains native forest available for wood production and less than one per cent is harvested in a given year – around 0.27 per cent in any given year.

Broad-scale clearance and conversion of native forest ceased on public land in 2010, under Tasmania's Policy for Maintaining a Permanent Native Forest Estate.

The area of old growth harvested by Sustainable Timber Tasmania has declined significantly as they transition to plantation and young forests. After harvesting, forests are then regrown to ensure the long-term sustainability of Tasmania's forests.

Tasmanian forestry is well regulated and our important natural and cultural values are protected through our world-class Forest Practices System. The forestry industry has an important role to play in combating the effects of climate change, by providing a renewable, green alternative to non-renewable materials such as plastic, concrete and steel.

The Government rejects the simplistic argument that the cessation of timber harvesting is the best strategy for carbon emissions mitigation. Instead, the Government accepts the findings of the experts, namely the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), and the International Energy Agency (IEA), that the sustainable management of forests, including a mixed strategy of conservation and timber production, is more likely to be optimal for carbon pollution reduction.

The IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land (2019) stated:

"Sustainable forest management can maintain or enhance forest carbon stocks, and can maintain forest carbon sinks, including by transferring carbon to wood products."

Given our native eucalypt forests are, effectively, fire driven, responsible, sustainable forestry management is also our greatest weapon in the fight against bushfires.

By actively managing our forests, through the harvesting or thinning of trees, followed by controlled low intensity post-harvest burning, we can markedly reduce fuel loads and the consequent risk of wildfires.

It would be a perverse outcome indeed to set aside all forests and forgo the emissions reduction benefit delivered through the use of wood, only to have forest-stored carbon returned to the atmosphere during a wildfire.

The views expressed recently by the Leader of the Greens, and others, that native forest logging exacerbates bushfires (both in terms of intensity and severity) do not accurately reflect contemporary scientific consensus on the matter.

The single, decade old report that underpins these views, has since been shown to be incorrect by a number of senior forest scientists and ecologists in published, peer reviewed journal articles, most notably:

- Ferguson and Cheney (2011) Wildfires, not logging, cause landscape traps, Australian Forestry.
- Attiwill, Ryan, Burrows, Cheney, McCaw, Neyland, Read (2013) Timber harvesting does not increase fire risk and severity in wet eucalypt forests of southern Australia, Conservation letters.

The Tasmanian Government recognises our forestry industry as a cornerstone of the Tasmanian economy, employing thousands of locals and injecting more than \$1.2 billion into our economy, while supporting regional communities and families. The Tasmanian Government is confident that sustainable forestry can continue to coexist with tourism and is strongly supportive of both sectors. For more information on Tasmania's sustainable forestry management practices, please visit the Department of state Growth website https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/energy_and_resources/forestry

I would like to thank you for bringing these matters to the government's attention and I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Resources

From: s 36 - personal >
Sent: Thursday, 30 April 2020 8:33 AM
To: The Premier (DPaC)
Subject: Re: Letter from the Hon Peter Gutwein MP

Categories: PJ, Link to existing corro

Dear Peter

Thank you for your response and providing all that information.
I wanted to respond in order to seek clarification on some of your points.

Firstly, I would like to note that these forests as **not** a wood bank. They are a carbon and diversity bank essential to the community and they do not belong to the forest industry.

While you advice that there have been no applications to log this forest, to date, that is not the main issue. It is important that the opportunity for these applications be closed and secure protection of these future potential production forests and all of Tasmania's native forests is legislated by you and your Government.

Documents obtained by the Tasmanian Greens under a Right to Information request have shown that you have been meeting with the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania which represents the companies compromising Tasmania forest industry. It is also noted that your discussion cover how to allow them access to these forests, something that cannot and should not be entertained.

As **Minister for Climate Change**, Premier Gutwein, you need to take serious action to mitigate climate impacts such as logging native forests. You can provide permanent protection for Tasmania's globally significant tract of native forests, including the future potential production forests. The science tells us that it is essential to protect our forests in order to reduce emissions and protect biodiversity and the most cost-effective method for reducing emissions.

Eight years on the global and national context for understanding the significance of Tasmanian's forests has shifted again. We have access to knowledge from top Climatologists and authors of the IPCC report(s) We now know that the increased risk of drought and extreme fire events associated with the climate emergency make it imperative to protect and restore the integrity of native forests across the globe. We know that logging increases both the risk and severity of extreme fire events We also know that the biodiversity crisis is as serious for life on earth as the climate crisis and that both crises can only be solved if we tackle them together. Nature based solutions to the climate and biodiversity crises are imperative and are backed by leading climatologists and being implemented across the world.

This shift is what is needed to reignite Tasmania. Choosing to protect and restore some of the most carbon dense forests on earth and hand on a national and global biodiversity treasure to future generations is a legacy for which your government could be proud.

I look forward to hearing further from you.

Kind regards
s 36 - personal

On Thu, Apr 16, 2020 at 11:10 AM The Premier (DPaC) <premier@dpac.tas.gov.au> wrote:

Dear s 36 - personal

Thank you for your email regarding logging in Tasmania's Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) Wood Bank.

Contrary to inaccurate claims, Tasmania's FPPF Wood Bank was not opened up for harvest from the 8th April 2020.

The Forestry (Rebuilding the Forestry Industry) Act 2014 outlines the specific process to allow for the exchange or conversion of FPPF land to Permanent Timber Production Zone land. Any request for exchange or conversion is required to undergo stringent assessment and must be accepted by both Houses of Parliament.

Importantly, there have been no applications made to date.

The Government continues to engage with the industry about the FPPF Wood Bank, and has no immediate plans to convert any FPPF Land to production forest.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is a strong supporter of Tasmania's forestry industry, which contributes some \$1.2 billion to our economy and employs thousands of Tasmanians through direct and indirect jobs, especially in regional areas.

I am also providing you with a link to the Tasmanian Government website relating to the Coronavirus www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au which has a range of very good information for individuals, families and businesses.

Thank you for writing to me.

Yours sincerely,

Hon Peter Gutwein MP

Premier of Tasmania

Treasurer

Minister for Climate Change

Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

Minister for Tourism

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From: s 36 - personal >
Sent: Saturday, 11 April 2020 10:19 AM

To: Gutwein, Peter (DPaC) <Peter.Gutwein@dpac.tas.gov.au>
Cc: s 36 - personal
Subject: Tasmanian Logging Decision regarding the Tarkine

Dear Peter

It has disappointedly come to my attention that you have made one of Australia's, and the world's, last remaining old-growth forests is open for logging, after its Howard-era protection ended on April 8.

The 356,000-hectare tract is now joining the 800,000 hectares of native rainforest that you have already made available to loggers for rare "specialty" timbers and woodchips, despite it being an ancient, untouched habitat for endangered flora and fauna.

The forest, which includes the Tarkine is a high-conservation-value region home to rare trees and the critically endangered swift parrot, quolls, wedge tailed eagles, Tasmanian devils and countless others.

Once these ancient trees are felled, loggers fire-bomb the area to ensure any residual organic matter is obliterated, which loggers say "mimic nature", according to Forestry Victoria. However, scientific studies have shown it can take up to 80–100 years for the soil to recover.

Your decision as premier, and minister for Climate change, is not only disappointing, it is devastating and hypocritical. As minister for Climate Change, you should be well aware of the important that rainforests and environmental protection play in the large goal of climate action.

Native forest logging should not be happening anymore for climate mitigation and for the ecosystem.

I sincerely hope that you repeal your decision and think critically about how important it is for you to take a strong stand for environmental protection and climate action which go hand in hand.

Kind regards,

s 36 - personal

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Minister for Primary Industries and Water
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1 May 2020

s 36 - personal

Dear s 36 -

Thank you for your letter of 7 April 2020 to Minister Jaensch and Minister Barnett regarding the Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) Land. I am responding as Minister for Resources.

There is approximately 356 000 hectares of FPPF Land outside of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA). The Tasmanian Government has committed to not allow any commercial forestry or mining activities on FPPF Land situated within the TWWHA, and is progressing the formal reservation of the FPPF Land occurring within the TWWHA.

As you would be aware, the FPPF Land has been specifically set aside by Parliament, through the *Forestry (Rebuilding the Forest Industry) Act 2014* (the Act), for future wood production. The Act is very clear:

- Native forest harvesting cannot be undertaken on the FPPF land;
- Special species timber harvesting can occur, subject to approvals and adherence to the Tasmanian Special Species Management Plan.

Parliament also established two processes in the Act, exchange and conversion, so that FPPF land could be changed to Permanent Timber Production Zone Land. There is a detailed statutory process to progress either a conversion or exchange order. Any order requires the acceptance of both Houses of the Tasmanian Parliament.

The Government is not currently progressing any orders to exchange or convert FPPF land. In the event that the timber resources on the land are required, the Government will observe the detailed process laid down by Parliament in every respect.

We note your offer of providing information pertaining to the land. In regard to your request for a statement of reasons under s 29 of the *Judicial Review Act 2000*, we are advised that this is not a right that enlivens prior to a relevant decision being made. As no decision on FPPF land has been made, we cannot accept your request at this time. If, in the future, a relevant decision is made by which you are aggrieved, you may request a statement of reasons at that time.

The Tasmanian Government recognises our forestry industry as a cornerstone of the Tasmanian economy, employing thousands of locals and injecting more than \$1.2 billion into our economy, while supporting regional communities and families. To date, forestry activity is being maintained through the

COVID-19 pandemic, and is helping offset the significant economic impact from the major downturn. Sustainable forestry will play an important role in rebuilding our economy and providing much needed jobs, particularly in our regions. Tasmanian forestry is well regulated and sustainable, and natural and cultural values are protected through our world-class Forest Practices System.

We thank you for your letter and trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

Hon Guy Barnett MP
Minister for Resources

Released under RTI