

To Whom It May Concern,

FEEDBACK TO GOVERNMENTS ON STAGE TWO:
THE FUTURE OF OUR PUBLIC NATIVE FORESTS.

We live in 24 acres of spotted gum forest on the far south coast of NSW and daily we witness the refuge that we provide to a wide variety of flora and fauna. We can see the devastation caused by the Regional Forest Agreements to flora and fauna in other areas of the Great Southern Forests. Forest wildlife as a result is dwindling, we are losing our carbon stores at an alarming rate and our water supplies. This is our heritage for future generations. This is why this topic is of utmost importance to us, our children and the generations who will come after us.

We do not want government to renew the RFAs. There is now plentiful evidence they do not support ecologically sustainable forest management. There is also a lack of accountability and transparency in their implementation.

There are alternative models for forest management that are sustainable and that protect our diverse living ecosystem. We have now reached a point where our public native forests have greater environmental and economic value if left standing. There are plentiful existing plantation forests for local and export use. Why not utilise these and leave the Great Southern Forests for the unique diverse and extraordinarily rich resource they are, socially, environmentally and ecologically.

Instead we need a long term sustainable plan that protects and sustainably manages this valuable resource. We need recognition that they form a foundational role in our climate and water production, and contribute enormously to societal well being.

Also, we need to respect the traditional custodians of the land for the knowledge they have about the long term sustainable management of our region.

We need to recognise the role forests play in climate change mitigation and carbon sequestration and also in their sheer beauty and hence value for tourism.

In specific steps to transition out of the RFAs we agree with Great Southern Forests NSW on the suggestion that a levy be placed on the Forest Corporation per hectare logged between now and the closure of the native forest industry. We also think there should be a water quality levy imposed on all logging operations undertaken in estuary catchments.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if any part of this submission requires clarification.

Regards

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