



tasmanian conservation trust inc

Letter to the editor
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Kelty deal promises little for forest protection

The Draft Kelty Forests agreement released last month indicated that the forestry industry was close to agreeing on the protection of 360,000 to 430,000 hectares of forests on public land – down from the 572,000 ha proposed. This would be a very disappointing outcome as most important forests would not be protected, the logging industry would give up very little and the conflict will remain.

About half the 572,000 ha proposed for protection from logging is unwanted or unavailable for logging; 170,000 ha are informal reserves (areas set aside from logging but not securely reserved) and 100,000 ha is not in wood production areas (areas with no forests or are too rocky, steep or remote). The logging industry generally does not want to log in wilderness areas for these reasons.

If only 360,000 ha of forests are actually protected and all 270,000 ha of unloggable forest are included, the forest industry has only given up 90,000 ha of forest. The Draft Kelty agreement also makes it clear that the parties are undecided whether forests which are protected from logging will be reserved at all. I fear they will be put into a deferred forest zone (as with the RFA) to protect them from logging for only a limited period.

The TCT did not endorse the Forests Statement of Principles because it failed to do a comprehensive assessment of all forest values (wilderness, biodiversity, carbon etc) across all 2 million hectares of unprotected forests: 1.27 million on public land and 820,000 on private land.

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