



tasmanian conservation trust inc

Media Release

Sunday 8 May 2011

Conservation groups unite: to support a logging moratorium and reject the Gunns' proposed Tamar Valley pulp mill

Eight conservation groups which met in Campbell Town on Saturday 7 May (listed below) call upon the state government to instruct Forestry Tasmania to immediately establish a true moratorium to stop logging of identified high conservation value forests (HCVF) on public land, as a first step in establishing a lasting forest peace deal.

The groups also supported 'Friends of the Tamar Valley' and 'Pulp the Mill' in calling for Gunns to abandon its giant Kraft chemical pulp mill at Long Reach in the Tamar Valley and for the state government to revoke the Pulp Mill Assessment Act and stop providing support to the mill.

The meeting convenor and Tasmanian Conservation Trust Director, Peter McGlone, said that "The groups at the meeting and many others consulted emphatically rejected the idea that, somehow, forest conservation outcomes should be conditional upon support for the pulp mill. We all support forest protection and oppose the Gunns proposed pulp mill and could never sign up to any agreement which supported the pulp mill in exchange for forest protection or any thing else."

Lucy Landon-Lane, spokesperson for Pulp the Mill, said, "Bill Kelty, in his interim report on the Forest Statement of Principles, proposed that the mill have a new assessment process. This retrospective legitimising of the pulp mill is absurd and pointless. We fear this is the horrendous 'forests for the pulp mill deal'. The fast-tracked Pulp Mill Assessment Act must be repealed and the mill under-go a thorough, independent assessment such as the ditched RPDC process which found the mill to be critically non-compliant in environmental and social concerns. The government must also stop spending public money on infrastructure and other support for the mill."

Spokesperson for CODE Green, Lisa Searle, said that "We are sick and tired of seeing Tasmania's unique and irreplaceable native forests being destroyed. Until the state government establishes a true and complete moratorium or permanent protection is given to these forests, we will not stop protesting. We want the Tasmanian public to know that there is no moratorium in place and that this is simply not good enough."

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The groups who met strongly supported the Huon Valley Environment Centre, Still Wild Still Threatened and CODE Green's call for a genuine moratorium and their actions in support of such a moratorium. While the state government describes these groups and their protests as radical and unhelpful, what they want is very reasonable and nothing more than the Forest Statement of Principles asked of the Tasmanian government.

"By failing to stop logging in these areas that we all value, the state government is undermining attempts to settle the conflict over forests. Instead of acting, the Giddings government meekly supports an out-of-control Forestry Tasmania in continuing with business-as-usual" Peter McGlone concluded.

Forestry Tasmania's fake logging moratorium:

- allows logging to continue at a rate which is the same or faster than normal
- allows logging and roading to continue in high conservation value forests including wilderness areas and
- fails to guarantee that FT will permanently protect a single hectare of forests after six months

The TCT convened the 7 May meeting to discuss groups' concerns that the Forests Statement of Principles and the Bill Kelty process will not deliver the conservation outcomes which have been promised let alone the conservation outcomes we and many in the conservation movement consider to be responsible and prudent.

FURTHER COMMENTS:

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The groups which attended the 7 May Tasmanian Forests and Pulp Mill meeting and endorse this media release are:

- Tasmanian Conservation Trust
- Pulp the Mill
- Friends of the Tamar Valley
- Citizens Opposed to the Destruction of the Environment (CODE Green)
- Tasmanian Environment Association
- Diversity Tasmania
- Upper Meander Catchment and Landcare Group
- Western Rivers Preservation Trust

Groups which were unavailable for the meeting and endorse this media release are:

- Huon Valley Environment Centre
- North-east Bioregional Network
- Still Wild Still Threatened
- Now we the People