

SUBMISSION No. 82
Inquiry into the Australian forestry industry



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Timber harvesting on Bruny Island is part of its future as well as part of our heritage. Timber harvesting is minimal impact, and complements tourism and agriculture. Bruny Island has a long history of timber harvesting in both public and private forests.

Sustainable forestry is seen as effective mitigation against global warming. Forestry provides a valuable industry to the island's economy providing critical mass to maintain roads and other public infrastructure and services as well as diversifying farm income.

Heritage

Timber harvesting from Bruny Island's forests has been going on for nearly 200 years, it is still a vital part of the Island's economy, and the heritage of timber is intertwined with its history, its economy and its environment.



Such a link can be seen from the depiction of a timber scene on the back of Australia's \$20 pound note that was in circulation from 1914 to 1945

Such links also reach to Hobart as the pictured tree, once felled, was destined for Gray's sawmill at Adventure Bay that used equipment originally part of the Degraeve's steam powered mill at Cascades, now southern Tasmania's famous brewery.

The links between tourism and the timber industry exist today with forestry roads accessing look outs and walking tracks, many of which follow the tramways of past logging.

Minimal Impact:

The carefully managed harvesting of timber has minimum impact on Bruny. The forest practices plans are developed after extensive community consultation and landscape modeling. The island is home to National Parks, farming and forestry, it has small settlements and during holiday periods a bustling population of urban folk coming for a short stay.

Of the 35,300 ha of land on Bruny Island, 27% is State forest, 20% is reserves managed by the Parks service and 53 % is privately owned. Of the State forest, over half is within Informal or Formal reserves and only 4,400 ha are managed as working forests (timber harvesting) the Production Zone. Forestry Tasmania management plan restricts the rate of harvesting so that it will not increase beyond an average rate of 3 trucks per day. Forestry Tasmania's three year production plan shows only two coupes to be harvested on South Bruny during the 2010/2011 financial year, totaling only 44 hectares. Yet this small harvest will generate over \$1.4 million mill door landed value. It also provides income for local Bruny Island families.



This balance created by the Regional Forest Agreement has produced a win-win outcome in balancing environmental impacts with economic opportunities.

Forestry impacts on Global Warming

The United Nations International Panel on Climate Change found that:

“In the long term, a sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit¹.”

The Bruny Island branch strongly advocates for the development of a viable scale biochar plant or plant producing Rayon in conjunction with bio energy for the Island or nearby on mainland Tasmania, this could be an exciting opportunity for local landowners to service a new market other than export wood chips for their harvesting residues and low quality pulp wood.

Conclusion

Members of the Bruny Island Primary Industry branch believe that there are positive current and future prospects for the forestry industry, provided the government of the day is prepared to support the Regional Forest Agreement and extending it another 20 years. Such certainty is needed for private

¹ Nabuurs, G.J., et al, 2007: Forestry. In Climate Change: Mitigation 4th Assessment Report WG III Intergovernmental Panel on Climate.

landowners to continue to invest in native forest on their property and for investors willing to process timber from State and private forests.

Such an extension to the RFA may also reduce the campaigning of environmental groups which has put a large constraint on the ability of the industry to invest in new projects. Whilst there are opportunities for diversification, value adding and product innovation these may not be realised due to the political campaign by environmental groups to transition forestry production from our native forests.

With very little land suitable on Bruny Island available for plantation development such a transition from native forest is opposed by branch members, there is no justifiable argument for a transition, (be it environmental, social or economic). To the opposite native forest based forestry on Bruny Island is sustainable, it is part of this Island's proud heritage, it is an economic provider and provider of high quality timber resource. Branch members extend an open invitation to the Committee to visit Bruny Island to witness first hand the social, economic and environmental value of forestry.

Richard Clarke
President