

SUBMISSION No. 97
Inquiry into the Australian forestry industry

Tasmanian Public & Environmental Health Network (TPEHN)

http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Pollution_Information_Tasmania



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Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Agriculture, Resources, Fisheries and Forestry
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Dear Sir

Inquiry into the Australian forestry industry

I would like to comment on the following terms of reference:

Environmental impacts of forestry, including:

- impacts of plantations upon land and water availability for agriculture;
- the development of win-win outcomes in balancing environmental costs with economic opportunities;

Good Public Health policy is fundamentally dependent on sound sustainable environmental practices.

Sustainable forestry practices in Tasmania need to be achieved without promotion of industrial exotic monoculture plantations with minimalistic human health and environmental impact assessments.

No matter how 'clean' a pulp mill process may be stated to be, the activities associated with a pulp mill including the current plans for plantation management which are required to feed it, are not.

Current plantation practices will eventually degrade current Tasmanian ecosystems and adversely impact on public and environmental health.

The problems associated with pesticide use in plantations including surface water and groundwater contamination and the harmful effects of aerial spraying toxic pesticides has not been fully addressed

Likewise, the impact of the toxic products released by large acreages of monoculture exotic eucalypt plantations on ecosystem health and water quality has not been addressed with full and contemporary risk assessments.

Environmental pollutants from intensive industrial forestry are now recognised by international scientists and medical researchers to be adversely impacting on humans, wildlife, domestic animals, food crops and chains and our water catchments.

The eventual health costs (human and environmental) will be unmet if the present approach to these issues is not urgently and radically overhauled with the focus firmly placed on the protection of human and ecosystem health.

TPEHN will continue to put public health first in decisions on industrial developments and all environmental practices in Tasmania.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Alison Bleaney OBE - spokesperson for Tasmanian Public and Environmental Health