

Additional Comments by Senator Rachel Siewert

The Australian Greens support the recommendation of the Majority report and believe that there are serious problems with Regional Forest Agreements that require urgent review.

We are concerned however that the Majority report does not go far enough in addressing the failures of RFAs to enact the objects of the EPBC Act and meet our international conservation obligations and make these further recommendations.

The Australian Greens recommend the Independent Review of the EPBC Act consider the option of repealing s38 as the simplest and most equitable way of ensuring that forestry operations are carried out with proper environmental protection.

Threatened species

The Australian Greens believe action is required beyond what the Commonwealth is currently undertaking in the protection and management of threatened species in those areas covered by RFAs. The impact on the endangered Swift Parrot of logging in its breeding habitat is a case in point. We therefore recommend

That the Commonwealth Government commission an urgent review of the status, protection and management of all priority species and communities listed in RFAs

Climate change and forests

There is increasingly urgent scientific advice that rapid and deep greenhouse gas emission cuts are required, continued industrial scale native forest logging is inconsistent with this objective.

The Australian Greens recommend that old growth forests should be protected immediately followed by a rapid phase down of all other industrial scale native forest logging. This should be accompanied by a well-funded transition plan for affected workers and regions.

Gunns proposed pulpmill

The combination of the Tasmanian RFA and amendments to the EPBC Act have prevented any Commonwealth evaluation of the impact of native forest logging to supply Gunn's pulpmill together with continued export woodchipping. Impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance, particularly threatened species and World Heritage values, have not been assessed. Nor has the impact on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

The Australian Greens recommend:

That the Minister for the Environment undertake a Strategic Assessment of the impact of supplying wood from Tasmania's native forests for the operation of Gunns' proposed pulpmill, including wood to be burned for electricity generation, and for exports as whole logs or woodchips.

**Senator Rachel Siewert
Australian Greens**