

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to the Senate inquiry.

I would like to specifically address point e of the inquiry into:

**the effectiveness of Regional Forest Agreements, in protecting forest species and forest habitats where the EPBC Act does not directly apply;**

The Wielangta Forest in South East Tasmania provides habitat to threatened and endangered species, the swift parrot, the Tasmanian wedge tailed eagle, the stag beetle and the endangered orchids [Corunastylis nuda - tiny midge orchid](#) and [Pterostylis atriola - Snug Greenhood](#).

As the Federal Court case showed, current forestry management regimes in Wielangta are further endangering species, because of exemptions to the EPBC Act granted to Forestry Tasmania and the contractors Gunns Ltd under the Regional Forest Agreement.

The Regional Forest Agreement is not functioning as a protector of forest species or habitat to threatened and endangered species and moreover neither is the Forest Practices Authority, because it fails to rigorously examine contractors' and Forestry Tasmania's inclusion of these species in Forest Practices Plans and enforce their protection on the ground through audited implementation of those plans.

Furthermore, these forests, in particular coupe W19D which has *never* been logged, must be protected from wood chipping and their value as carbon sinks assessed, to ensure that the publically owned forest provides maximum return to Tasmanian taxpayers.

The [recent ANU research](#) showed the gaping holes in the Government's proposed carbon trading scheme, which as I understand it, does not include the forest industry. These holes must be closed so old growth and high conservation value forests can offset carbon emissions, for Australia or international countries, through smart trading regimes, and deliver habitat protection simultaneously.

The Senate Committee needs to take action to repeal the changes to the Regional Forest Agreement made by Howard and Lennon and follow through on the Federal Court's initial findings and ensure Australia's forests are included in proposed carbon trading schemes.

Your sincerely

Jo Murray