

Submission to

Regional and Rural Affairs and Transport References Committee

re

Plantations For Australia: The 2020 Vision

from

M.&N. Wilkinson 46 Sorell street Devonport 7310 Tasmania.



To write this submission we have spoken with a local saw miller. He is happy to be contacted -- Peter Cunningham 89 Hillcrest Rd Devonport. His sawmill is situated at Latrobe. Phone number 0364244561.

He said----- Evan Rolley Director Forestry Tas. informed sawmillers that small mill logs only will be available to saw millers in Tasmania.

Intimidation is rife in the industry.

A crisis looms for Australian sawmillers--already there are log shortages. On land that is claimed to be "locked up" no more than 10% would contain timber for sawmilling.

Eco systems keep forests healthy.

Selective logging kept forests healthy.

Stream side strips are not sustainable- they are open to disease.

There are no independent reviews.

The lack of milling timber in Victoria cannot be picked up in Tasmania.

During the past 30 years we have followed the destruction of our forests because of clear felling rather than selective logging. We have expressed our concerns to Federal Environmental ministers, local political members via letters to local papers and on radio. As the destruction continues ever more people, some ex forestry workers, express their concerns via the press and on radio.

Last week Scottsdale Council and a council from the south both expressed their concerns on radio re: clear felling in their regions "without proper consultation" with council. In Scottsdale the area of concern was their water catchment.

The Australian National Accounts show that Tourism directly contributes 4.5% to Gross Domestic Product. Tourism gross value added is higher than of agriculture, forestry and fishing combined. (Aust. Tourism Forecast 2000) Tasmania is expecting an explosion of tourists with the introduction of the two new ferries. Pristine forests are a huge draw card world wide- there are so few left. In Tasmania the State is enveloped with smoke during Autumn when Forestry burn-offs take place. Clear felled, bare areas plus one patch of radiata pines in a previous pristine area are not geared to tourism.

The very low return on equity of Forestry Tas. has been pointed out on

radio by Tony McCall (Tas. University) and N.J. Edwards in Tasmanian Conservationist (April 2002, pages 4, 5 & 6,) 2.5% and operating margins fell by 6%. Gunns achieved a profit of \$17.8 million up from \$8.7 million the previous year.

Over the past year 5000 hectares of dairy farmland on the north west coast has been converted to euc. nitens. Seed potato areas have gone, people have gone together with services to the areas, council rate values have dropped and financial business has suffered. Young people no longer have a future farming option. A further 6000 hectares mainly in northern Tasmania have gone to woodchip plantations. On ABC radio (6th June 2002) Dr. Brian Finlay Hydrologist Melb. University, spoke in amazement at the extent of forestry plantations across the northern part of Tasmania. He expressed a concern that "research should have been done before such big areas were put into plantations". He added that in Victoria some rivers had decreased by 50% due to forestry practices.

Tony McCall on ABC radio (8/7/02) said the cost of running Forestry Tasmania last year was \$132 million.

During the recent election campaign in Tasmania, Rene Hidding now Liberal leader, said on ABC radio "that Tasmania should not be sending logs overseas we should be making furniture." Thousands of pine logs are exported. Since 1989 wood chipping has increased by 44%, from 2.9 million tonnes to 4.9 million tonnes, (2001 figure).

Our opinion -- the 2020 vision conducted in Tasmania resulted in the number one priority by the wide range of people who took part, was for clear fell logging to cease by the end of this year.

We recommend that a completely independent group of qualified people be set up to take charge of forestry in Tasmania.

We would recommend that the Committee receiving these submissions make a private, unannounced tour of Tasmania on ground and by air. That member speak to sawmillers, people in the street unannounced together with members of Councils.

WE, the people own the native forests (RFA Commissioner information) we wish to see them utilized according to a fast changing world climate.