

# Australian Greens Dissenting Report

1.1 Illegal logging not only impacts on local communities through loss of resources and environmental damage, it also damages Australian businesses' ability to compete on a fair playing field.

1.2 The Greens support strong action on illegal logging but it is difficult to see how this bill will lead to a substantial improvement in the policing of illegal timber imports entering Australia.

1.3 Placing the onus on industry to self-regulate and self-monitor is a small step at a time when big steps are needed. The Greens do not support the exposure draft in its current form. Amendments to the bill should ensure:

- parity or stronger measures than those in place in the US and Europe against illegal logging, including a comprehensive definition of illegal logging that encompasses corruption, indigenous land rights and technical breaches of laws or codes;
- a requirement on the governments of exporting nations to avoid corruption or lose the market;
- the prohibition is immediate and regulations are enacted within three months of the legislation; this legislation has been on the cards for years so industry has had plenty of time to adjust and prepare for change;
- the prohibition is broadened beyond just the importation of timber to include all steps of the supply chain, similar to the US and EU regulations, so that all participants in the trade take responsibility;
- penalties for breaching the prohibition are broadened to include fines or forfeiture within the act rather than it being left to the courts;
- approval of certifiers is a rigorous process, clearly outlined in the act and that any process needs to include government oversight;
- the declaration information to be as broad as the US and EU legislation.

1.4 One of the difficulties in scrutinising this legislation was the absence of regulations; there is no timeline for when the regulations may be prepared or come into effect. It is inappropriate to refer key components of the process framework to delegated instruments as this limits the parliament's ability to review and amend legislation.

1.5 A chain of custody certification seems to be the most robust way to combat illegal logging. Ensuring that an independent body is responsible for certifying wood origin, type and licence to log the identified coupe then provides the foundation for certification to carry on to furniture makers, sawmillers and importers.

1.6 Setting up such a process also opens the possibility of addressing the sustainability of logging. The current exposure draft is only assessing illegal timber. It does not cover logged products emanating from native forests containing rare or endangered species or where traditional owners have not given or do not maintain assent to the logging.

1.7 Greenpeace in its submission identified 35 recommendations in 15 areas to improve the legislation; the Australian Greens support its call.

**Senator Rachel Siewert**

**Senator Christine Milne**

**Senator Bob Brown**