



The Rational Environmentalists

March 12th 2014

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

FACTS DEMAND CHANGE TO WORLD HERITAGE

NOMINATION

A report released today by the Australian Environment Foundation demonstrates that the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area 'minor boundary' nomination by the Gillard government is deeply flawed and should be amended as proposed by the Abbott government.

The key issue highlighted in the report is that the current nomination includes timber harvesting coupes and plantations abusing the integrity of the World Heritage Area (WHA) "outstanding universal value" criteria undermining continued public support.

"There is no way many of the areas included in this nomination can be classed as of outstanding universal value" said Max Rheese, executive director of the Australian Environment Foundation.

"The nomination as it stands is an affront to anyone who supports the special status of the WHA. For most the dispute is not over whether there should be additional WHA, but the extent and integrity of all the areas nominated.

"The nomination has ignored the need for balance between the globally accepted 'wise-use' principles of the International Union for Conservation of Nature which recognise that communities have a fundamental right to be able to utilise natural resources while ensuring conservation values are safeguarded."

The report shows the 172,000 hectare area nominated by the Gillard government is seven times larger than the 23,783 hectares agreed between the Rudd government and the World Heritage Committee (WHC). The Rudd government and then environment minister, Peter Garrett rejected calls for the WHA to be extended further.

The 'minor boundary' nomination also exceeds the "absolute upper limit" allowed by the WHC operating guidelines for extensions that avoid independent scientific assessment.

"The nomination breaches WHC guidelines, IUCN principles and is inherently unbalanced in its approach to meeting the needs of communities and conservation.

"We support the excision of 74,000 hectares from the nomination as removing the presently highly disturbed sites and plantations will preserve the integrity of the listing and maintain high conservation value areas" said Mr Rheese.

- ENDS -

The report is available here:

<http://aefweb.info/data/Tasmanian%20World%20Heritage%20Area%20Report.pdf>

The AEF is a not-for-profit, membership-based environment organisation having no political affiliation taking an evidence-based, solution focused approach to environmental issues.

The AEF embraces the IUCN (World Conservation Union) [sustainable use principles](#) as providing an ethical balanced framework for many environmental challenges.

We accept that environmental protection and sustainable resource use are generally compatible.

www.aefweb.info