



December 10th 2013

The Rational Environmentalists

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

TASMANIA WORLD HERITAGE LISTING COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

The Australian Environment Foundation today supported the federal government's resolve to rescind the ill-advised World Heritage listing of Tasmanian forests which are part of the current 'peace deal' process.

"Australia must pull its weight in meeting local demand for forest products and not continue to outsource our consumer demand to countries with lesser environmental standards in timber harvesting" said AEF executive director Max Rheese.

"We must return some balance to protecting genuine high-conservation forests and meeting demand for paper and timber products the public want.

"Every forest closed to timber harvesting only puts further pressure on the \$2 billion deficit in timber products incurred by Australia each year through increasing imports from countries that do not meet best practice in forestry operations.

"Some people wilfully ignore the fact Australia is outsourcing our 'environmental conscience' by meeting our demand from overseas. Out of sight, out of mind might be convenient for forest protesters hypocritically campaigning to lock up local forests while they ignore the poor environmental outcomes in overseas forests."

Australia has the sixth largest area of forests globally yet imports more than \$4 billion annually in timber products while even without the latest heritage listing over 80 per cent of Tasmania's public land forests are permanently excluded from timber harvesting.

Locking up even more forests provides no additional benefit to Tasmanians as tourism and forestry have grown side by side for over a century.

"The publicly stated position of some environment groups to end all native forestry is destroying the credibility of the environment movement and shows no willingness to strike a balance between regulated use of a small portion of forest reserve and the need to cater to the needs of society.

"World best practice forestry epitomises the ideals of any thinking environmentalist as it is a truly renewable natural resource demonstrated by the fact that some of the forest in the heritage listed area has been harvested multiple times" said Mr Rheese.

- ENDS -

The Australian Environment Foundation is a not-for-profit, membership-based environment organisation having no political affiliation. The AEF embraces the IUCN (World Conservation Union) sustainable use principles (http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/2000_oct_sust_use_of_wild_living_resources.pdf) as providing an ethical balanced framework for environmental challenges.

We accept that environmental protection and sustainable resource use are generally compatible. For more information about AEF visit www.aefweb.info