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Analysis of logging plan shows important values need protection

A new report released today by the Wilderness Society has analysed Forestry Tasmania's three year wood production plan and overlaid important environmental values, like the habitat of swift parrots, masked owls and the giant freshwater lobster. A range of coupes contain one or more of these values and the report makes recommendations for improvements to current regulation to ensure these conservation values are protected.

The report notes that Forestry Tasmania is yet to conduct detailed operational planning on the coupes, and the Wilderness Society will work to ensure these environmental values are protected as part of the next planning phase. It is seeking a strong commitment from the Tasmanian Government that environmental values in production forests will be protected.

"This report uses the industry's own data, planning tools and recommendations, as well as the most up-to-date research, to identify important values and it highlights the need for their protection," said Vica Bayley, spokesperson for the Wilderness Society.

"The Tasmanian Forest Practices system has undergone some improvements over time, based on the ongoing research of the Forest Practices Authority, and Forestry Tasmania has implemented changes in its own planning approach. However, as this report shows, further improvements are required.

"We have seen cases in the recent past where expert advice to protect threatened species habitat has been overridden by Government¹ and logging has proceeded despite scientific recommendations to the contrary. There are also longstanding, research-based proposals, such as targets for protection of mature forest across the landscape, that have not been fully implemented.

"The gaps in the existing system need to be filled to deliver a complete set of effective and loophole-free prescriptions for managing conservation values in production forests. This would provide certainty for industry, assurance for the Tasmanian community and customers of wood products, and a more secure future for threatened species.

"Both science and logic tells us that logging in the habitat of endangered species like the swift parrot and giant freshwater lobster threatens their survival.

"Safeguarding areas of important habitat is a foundation principle of sustainable land management and Tasmania needs both a credible network of secure conservation reserves and regulations that can actually protect threatened species habitat on a permanent basis.

The report is predicated on the formal protection of areas of oldgrowth and rainforests reserves, verified and protected through the Tasmanian Forest Agreement process, but earmarked for

¹ Freedom of Information and other mechanisms have recently proven that logging has been approved in important areas of threatened species habitat despite the advice of expert scientists. This was laid out in the 2015 report [Pulling a Swiftie](#).

reversal and logging by the Hodgman Government (with no industry support or the agreement of its own Ministerial Advisory Council).

“While it is clear Tasmania needs to formally protect areas like the Tarkine, Wielangta, the Blue Tier and Bruny Island in new national parks and reserves, this analysis will contribute to the protection of important values in the production forests.

“This report has been undertaken as a constructive contribution to the discussion on improving forestry in Tasmania, and we look forward to engaging with Government, industry, regulators, and other stakeholders on ensuring important forest values are protected, wherever they are found.”

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