



# THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

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## FSC undermined by backing logging of 600-year-old trees

The standards of the world's leading timber certifying body, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), are being questioned after one of its British auditors gave an environmental tick of approval to log forests containing 600-year-old trees in Western Australia.

The WA Government's logging agency, the Forest Products Commission (FPC), has secured FSC certification from Soil Association Woodmark for FPC's logging operations in the tall eucalypt Karri forests in the state's south-west. These forests are also home to at least 15 threatened species including Red-Tailed Black Cockatoos, Mainland Quokkas and Western Quolls.

"FSC is seen as the international gold standard for wood certification, approving products that meet its high standard for forest management, but FSC has got it all wrong in Western Australia," said Wilderness Society National Forest Campaigner Warrick Jordan.

"When consumers buy a product branded as sustainable, they don't expect to be buying paper made from a 600-year-old giant or a tree that was home to animals threatened with extinction, such as the Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo.

"Areas currently being assessed for their old-growth values by the WA Government, such as the Northcliffe forest (*see attached photo*), are now open for logging under an FSC stamp.

"Soil Association should withdraw the FSC certificate and conduct a thorough review of how this decision was made. We will be pursuing FSC complaints processes to ensure its high standards are maintained, and we are calling on governing bodies FSC Australia and FSC International to act to ensure the credibility of FSC in Australia is not damaged because of this bad decision.

"In 2011 Australian Paper had its FSC accreditation revoked because of logging endangered Leadbeater's Possum habitat in Victoria, and now we are looking at a repeat performance where FSC has been awarded despite clear environmental damage.

"The Wilderness Society is a strong supporter of FSC, but its high standards have to be delivered on the ground, not just on paper. FSC isn't a stamp you get out of a cereal packet – it should be a guarantee that consumers are getting products from well-managed forests where wildlife is protected.

"Large native forest logging companies across Australia, such as VicForests and Forestry Tasmania, are also pursuing FSC, and FSC's high standards need to be applied consistently around the country.

"Local environment groups have given information to Soil Association about serious errors in the FSC application and impacts on threatened species and FSC-defined old-growth forests, but Soil Association appears to have given a tick of approval without addressing these fundamental issues."

**For further comment contact Warrick Jordan on 0451 633 197**

FPC FSC Controlled Wood Public Summary Report is available at:

<http://info.fsc.org/details.php?id=a024000000Kcf67AAB&type=certificate&return=certificate.php>

**Image attached:** One of the giant trees subject to logging in the now-FSC-certified Northcliffe forest.