

Dear Environment and Communications References Committee

**Submission to the Australia;s Faunal Extinction Crisis inquiry**

Lawyers for Forests, Inc (LFF) is a voluntary environmental non-government organisation, incorporated in 2000, comprising legal professionals working towards the protection and conservation of Australia's native forests.

We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to this vital review.

We will limit our comments to the following aspects of the Terms of References-

- d. the adequacy of Commonwealth environment laws, including but not limited to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, in providing sufficient protections for threatened fauna and against key threatening processes;
- e. the adequacy and effectiveness of protections for critical habitat for threatened fauna under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;

It is LFF's considered view that current section 38 of the EPBC Act, which provides that Part 3 of the Act (Requirements for Environmental Approvals) does not apply to logging operations undertaken "in accordance with an RFA", is a significant driver of Australia's faunal extinction crisis. Accordingly, it is our view that the primary environmental legislation of this country, the EPBC Act, is wholly inadequate in providing sufficient, adequate and effective protections for-

- a. for the rare and threatened fauna that struggle to exist in those native forests within an RFA area; and
- b. the critical habitat for rare and threatened fauna within RFA areas.

We recommend that that 38 be removed from the EPBC Act as soon as possible.

A detailed explanation of our views is contained in the attached documents which, while prepared for reasons other than this inquiry, are equally applicable to this inquiry. The documents focus on the RFAs in Victoria and the problems they pose, in relation to protecting rare and threatened species in this state.

Should the Committee require, we would be happy to present any of this information in person or to provide further information in writing.

Kind regards

Lawyers for Forests, Inc