

*Tabled by Tasmanian Special Timbers Alliance
31 March 2014 - Hobart
Tasmanian wilderness inquiry*

Premier

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Andrew Denman
Director
Denman Marine Pty Ltd

16 JUL 2012

Dear Mr Denman

I refer to your email to me of 4 April 2012 regarding the special species timbers industry. I apologise for the delay in providing you with a response.

Thank you for providing me with your detailed insight into the special species sector of the industry and its importance to Tasmania's economy. I am well aware of the value of the sector and the hundreds of talented wood craft persons who add value to this resource. I acknowledge the importance of ensuring a sustainable future supply of suitable resource to underpin the sector's future. I am also aware that the resource for this unique industry largely is in Tasmania's wet forests, many of which are claimed by environmental organisations to have high conservation value and have campaigned for these forest to be added to Tasmania's conservation reserves system.

As you are aware, the Prime Minister and I signed the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement (TFA) on 7 August 2011. Under the terms of the TFA a process has been established to verify the high conservation value claims and to determine which areas could be reserved consistent with a guaranteed wood supply to industry that includes a special species supply. The forest industry has representatives who are working with environmental, union, community and contractor representatives to try and reach an agreement on the future of the industry. The Deputy Premier and I have both publically stated on many occasions that any agreement will need to accommodate the guaranteed wood supply for industry as set out in the IGA. This of course includes the special species timber guarantees.

I note your views that the special species wood supply guarantee in the IGA is less than the actual industry demand. However, the figure contained in the IGA was the amount that the industry representatives asked for in the process that lead up to the signing of the IGA. It is also the volume of special species sawlogs that industry said that was required in the Statement of Principles facilitated by Bill Kelty in June 2011. While the special species sector may well have a higher demand for resource that does not mean that supply to meet this level of demand can or should be guaranteed. The level of guaranteed supply must be sustainable both ecologically and economically. As you are aware the demand for high quality logs of some species such as Huon pine, King William pine and celery top pine greatly exceeds what can actually be supplied. There is also the issue of the specification of the log quality that these volumes refer to. There is a wide difference between the qualities of logs needed for boat planking and that which can be used to make craft items.

See over



As you have stated, the IGA intends that the guaranteed supply levels for special species timbers need to be verified. I understand that, as you have identified, the independent verification group led by Professor West did not directly address this issue in their reports released in March.

I am awaiting the outcomes of the current discussions by the industry stakeholders and I will in particular be looking to see how any agreement provides for the future of the special species sector.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Lara Giddings MLC
Premier