



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Trade Sub-Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 28 June 2012

Chair: Ms Janelle Saffin MP

Deputy: Hon Bruce Scott MP

Report tabled on Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011

The Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade today tabled its report into the Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill 2011. The Committee recommended that the bill be passed.

Trade Sub-Committee Chair, Ms Janelle Saffin, said that the bill supports Australia's efforts to address the negative impacts of illegal logging and promote international trade in timber products.

"Illegal logging imposes an enormous financial, environmental and social cost worldwide. The World Bank estimates that illegal logging as a criminal activity generates approximately US\$10 to 15 billion annually worldwide," Ms Saffin said. "Participants in the Committee's inquiry welcomed Australia's contribution to global efforts to combat illegal logging, noting that the bill moves Australia in line with similar legislation in the United States and European Union."

Under the bill, it is illegal to import illegally logged timber or to process illegally logged raw logs. Importers and domestic processors are required to comply with due diligence requirements that will be established in regulations.

In conducting its inquiry, the Committee focussed specifically on the following terms of reference:

Concern over the international implications of the bill which have been expressed by Canada, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea in their submissions to the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee inquiry.

(House of Representatives Selection Committee, Report No. 49)

Each of the identified countries provided submissions to the inquiry and representatives participated in a roundtable hearing with the Committee.

"As this is the third parliamentary committee inquiry into the proposed legislation, the Committee resolved to focus specifically on the reason for the bill's referral," Ms Saffin said. "Accordingly, the Committee has made two additional recommendations about consultation that are intended to address outstanding concerns held by timber exporting countries."

The report includes a minority report by the Coalition members of the Committee and additional comments from the Australian Greens.

The report is available at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>

For media comment: please contact the Trade Sub-Committee Chair, Ms Janelle Saffin on (02) 6621 9909 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 4323 (Parliament House)

For background information: please contact the Committee secretariat on **(02) 6277 2313** or via email at jscfadt@aph.gov.au.