

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 305
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: Tasmanian Masked owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae castanops*)
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 11 March 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Rice asked:

What is the government doing , or will it do to ensure the Tasmanian Masked owl, which is listed as endangered, and whose habitat is predominately found in areas covered by the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement, doesn't follow the swift parrot to the brink of extinction?

Answer:

Forestry operations conducted in accordance with the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) are exempt from the Commonwealth assessment and approval requirements of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act), except where operations are within World Heritage or Ramsar wetland sites.

The RFA provides key areas set aside to establish comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve systems to protect biodiversity, old-growth forests and wilderness, and provides other areas as being available for harvesting.

Under the Tasmanian RFA the Tasmanian Government has responsibility for ensuring forestry operations are undertaken in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management. RFAs provide a framework that enable forestry operations to be undertaken in accordance with statutory planning documents approved under the EPBC Act, such as the conservation advice for the Tasmanian Masked Owl.