

Letter to Editor

Sir,

Evan Rolley speaking on behalf of Forestry Tasmania recently made a media statement explaining the Community Forest Agreement's need for more than 15,000ha of plantation to cover a perceived short fall in sawlogs.

We believe the only people to benefit from this new agreement would be plantation investors getting a large tax write-off in advance. The report titled "Clearfelling and Wood chipping- an Economic Appraisal"(available from www.twff.com.au) documents waste of millions of dollars worth of high quality timber. The report also demonstrates if we were to divert 25% of the pulpwood stream from state forests to downstream processing, (which Mr Lennon himself has said can be done), the tax payer will benefit to the tune of \$15m in royalties translating into as much as \$387million in product revenue and up to 1,230 new timber processing jobs. Occassionally Forestry Tasmania has issued directives to put category 2 and 8 sawlogs straight into the pulpwood stream because of fluctuating industry demands industry.

The decrease in wasted timber would enable 23% less forest p.a. to be harvested therefore negating the need for more plantations. Some years ago, an existing major timber processing company proposed spending a large amount of value adding to timber in the current pulpwood stream but cancelled its plans when the chip mill was sold. Perhaps the new proposal to spend taxpayer's money helping the industry use lower quality logs could revive this excellent idea.

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