

Australia has 164 million hectares of forest -21% of its land area - and almost 5% of the world's forests. They contain an amazing diversity of plant and animal species as well as ecosystems. Our forests also play an important role in storing carbon and in regulating water flows, and have significant cultural heritage values to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Forests are also important to our economy. The forestry and wood production industries employ around 78,000 people and generate products worth over \$6b a year.

Current forestry practices favor native forests and monocultures of pine or blue gum, which do not encourage robust biodiversity within forestry.

Water use by plantations has not been properly assessed in regional catchment management.

Poor management of native forests in general is threatening the natural and cultural heritage values of Australia's forests.

Each year, over 250,000 hectares of forest are lost due to land clearing. Altered fire regimes and introduced plant and animal species are also diminishing the values of these areas. There are now over 770 higher forest plant species that are listed as being nationally threatened, along with over 88 animals.

Around 13% of Australia's forests are in conservation reserves. However, these reserves are not comprehensive nor representative of Australia's diverse natural ecosystems.

The Labor Government has done nothing to address these issues and sits on the fence over the necessary shift from logging in native forests to our substantial plantations.

..... a wiser use of **Forests**

## Our Plan

- Cease broad-scale **land-clearing** in all states.
- Immediate protection for all **forests of high conservation value**, and those in areas that are important for domestic water supply.
- Phase out the export of **wood chips**, and encourage value-adding at every possible opportunity to ensure Australia's logged resources are sold and exported for the highest possible return.
- Fund a **national water audit** to assess the impact of plantations and logging on water quality and quantity
- Encourage **investment in timber and paper** production through tax measures.
- Remove **subsidies** given to logging of native forests.
- Provide **restructuring assistance** to forestry workers and communities affected by the phase out of logging of native forests.
- Introduce further incentives to protect **native forests on private lands**.
- Ensure all forestry operations are subject to environmental, planning, heritage, native vegetation, biodiversity and water **laws**
- Ensure all **codes of practice** for forestry operations have legislative force and ensure all members of the public have legal standing to enforce these codes.
- Encourage the **integration of plantation forestry planning** with National, State, regional and local natural resource management planning processes.
- Ensure all forestry operators provide **accurate and timely information** on their activities and ensure they are subject to freedom of information processes.