Bottom of Form

**Industry report confirms: native forest logging unpopular & unprofitable**

**Thursday, March 1, 2018**

A new report by the timber industry lobby has confirmed that the logging of native forests in WA is far less profitable, and provides far fewer jobs, than WA’s plantation industry.

The report, ‘*Socio-economic impacts of the forest industry Western Australia’*, commissioned by Forest & Wood Products Australia, found that native forest logging and processing provides less than a quarter of the total jobs in WA’s timber industry, with the vast majority of timber jobs (76 per cent) found in WA’s hardwood and softwood plantation industries.

The report also compared the native forest and plantation industries’ economic contribution using Total Value of Output; Gross Regional Production; and Contribution to Household Income Component of the GRP, finding under each method of measurement, that the plantation and farm forestry industries provided far more benefit to the local economy (at 83-85 per cent of the total economic output of the WA timber industry) than native forest logging.

“Another striking finding in the report is that most people where logging is happening do not see the industry as beneficial to their community,” South-West MLC Diane Evers, who is the Greens Forest Spokesperson,  said.

“The report found that these communities see their future industries as agriculture and tourism, and that they are not happy about logging trucks on local roads nor the sight of devastated forests.

“I note that the jobs figures relied on businesses self-reporting so are probably a ‘best-case’ scenario.

“Sadly, in WA there still has not been a Government analysis to compare the economic benefits of leaving our native forests standing, including positive flow-on effects water quality and climate, amenity, nature tourism, honey production and regional attractiveness.”

The report can be downloaded from: (<http://www.fwpa.com.au/images/WA_Report_Dec2017_Final.pdf> . The following notes are provided as a guide.

**Jobs (page 19~):**

* The majority (76%) of direct jobs in the WA wood industry are in WA’s soft and hardwood plantations and associated processing, not in the logging or primary processing (including pulping, sawmilling) of native forests.

**Economic benefits (page 18~)**

The native forest-dependent sector of the WA wood industry contributed just:

* 15.6% of the Total Value of Output by the WA wood industry;
* 16% of the Gross Regional Production of the WA wood industry; and
* 16.6% of the Contribution to Household Income Component of the GRP of the WA wood industry.

**Local community perceptions (page 66~):**

* “Residents in all logging regions including Great Southern, Esperance and South-West WA viewed the forest industry as having fewer positive effects than farming and agriculture, and more negative effects”;
* “When views above negative effects were examined, the most common concerns reported about the forest industry were related to road impacts, and landscape aesthetics, with 67% in the Great Southern and Esperance region and 71% in the South West believing the industry had a negative impact on the traffic on local roads”;
* “The forest industry is not viewed as either being as important an industry as agriculture and tourism, or as having as many positive outcomes as these two other industries”;
* “In particular, the results suggest a lack of connection by many residents with the industry, with fewer feeling the industry contributed to the friendliness of the local community compared to the agriculture and tourism industries.”

**Get in touch:**

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