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**BirdLife Australia calls for immediate end to the
Tasmanian RFA and logging on Bruny Island**

BirdLife Australia, Australia's oldest conservation organisation, is calling for an immediate halt to the logging of critical Swift Parrot breeding habitat in southern Tasmanian forests, and for an immediate end to the Tasmanian Regional Forestry Agreement (RFA) that is pushing the species to extinction.

The call comes as the Bruny Island Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) was identified as one of the five Australian wildlife hotspots most at risk in BirdLife Australia's *Key Biodiversity Areas in Danger Report 2017*.

The Bruny Island KBA and the adjacent South-east Tasmania KBA provide critical breeding habitat for the Critically Endangered Swift Parrot – and irreplaceable habitats for five Endangered species: Forty-spotted Pardalote, Wedge-tailed Eagle, Grey Goshawk, Masked Owl and Azure Kingfisher.

BirdLife Tasmania Convenor, Dr Eric Woehler said the Tasmanian Government has signalled its intention to seek renewal of Tasmanian RFA and to accelerate deforestation throughout the state, including the resumption of logging of Swift Parrot breeding habitat on Bruny Island.

The 1997 agreement between the Commonwealth and Tasmanian Government exempts the Swift Parrot from the provisions of the Commonwealth's EPBC Act, which is intended to protect nationally threatened species. It expires in November.

Dr Woehler described the RFA as an, "abject failure at protecting these species over two decades".

"Research indicates that the population of Swift Parrots could decrease by as much as 94% within 16 years as a direct result of forestry activities if they are not stopped immediately," Dr Woehler said.

"It is imperative that the Tasmanian RFA is not renewed, so that the Commonwealth Government can intervene when necessary to protect all species threatened by forestry operations in Tasmania. If logging is allowed to resume on Bruny Island, it will spell the death knell for the Swift Parrot."

"BirdLife Australia is calling on the Australian Government to terminate immediately the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement that is hastening the extinction of the Swift Parrot" Dr Woehler said.

"We are also asking the Tasmanian Government to permanently protect Swift

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Parrot habitat on Bruny Island and mature forests throughout Southeast Tasmania.”



The ‘*Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Danger*’ 2017 report finds that 19 of Australia’s 315 internationally important bird habitats are at a Very High Threat level due to mining, unsustainable water use, and inappropriate development.

Birdlife Australia’s Head of Conservation, Samantha Vine, said the report is part of a global effort over the last 12 months to track the conservation status of over 13,000 sites of international significance for wildlife globally through the international KBA program.

The KBA standard identifies sites that contribute significantly to global biodiversity. It was adopted by 11 of the world’s leading nature conservation organisations at the 2016 World Conservation Congress in Hawaii.

Ms Vine said fewer than 20% of Australia’s 315 KBAs are fully protected, and even fewer are properly managed.

“This report shows we are faced with the stark reality that much of our unique wildlife faces extinction in the near future without urgent action by the Commonwealth to help protect the habitats they depend on. Much more work is needed to safeguard unique and endangered Australian birds like the Swift Parrot from extinction and uphold international conservation standards,” she said.

“It is unbelievable to think that we may be witnessing the demise of more bird species in our lifetime, even more so as they can be so easily prevented” Ms Vine added.

Ms Vine said the report does include positive news and showed species could be saved from the brink of extinction. “We have straightforward solutions to a number of the key problem areas addressed in this report. The missing piece in this biodiversity puzzle is the political will and support of our leaders.”

The full report is at <http://www.birdlife.org.au/campaigns/local-action-global-importance>

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