

MEDIA RELEASE: NATIVE FOREST LOGGING HAS LOST PUBLIC SUPPORT

New industry funded research that shows native forest logging no longer has public support comes as no surprise, according to south east forest campaigner, Harriett Swift.

Ms Swift was commenting on a study funded by Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA) , an industry body financed by the Federal Government, member levies and research grants.

The survey, "Community perceptions of Australia's forest, wood and paper industries: implications for social license to operate" showed that over 12,000 people from throughout Australia and found 70% of urban, and 65% of rural Australians find logging of native forests unacceptable. This compares to just 10% of urban, and 17% of rural Australians finding it acceptable.

Ms Swift, who is convener of the Chipstop Campaign said that the study only examined the native forest logging industry in general and did not specifically examine attitudes to woodchipping.

"I have absolutely no doubt that an examination of attitudes to woodchipping would produce even more negative results," she said.

"The industry itself has virtually admitted this and understands that it has a problem," she said.

"While we don't have specific and detailed data for this region, there is no reason to believe attitudes to native forest logging would be any more positive here."

"Indeed, our direct experience of decades of the most intensive logging in the State and equal to the worst in Australia gives us every reason to expect that support would be lower.

"The Eden chipmill was Australia's first export woodchip mill and it's time for it to transition to plantation wood or close."

"I appeal to candidates in the coming State and federal elections to take note of these results. It is not just a hard core of conservationists who've had enough of this industry," she said.

14 November 2018

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