

A SOCIALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Position:

- FAMILY FIRST believes Australians need assurance that there is an appropriate balance between environmental, social and economic values for their forests. This requires a system of secure, formal reserves and national parks.
- FAMILY FIRST also believes that the forest industries, on which tens of thousands of Australian workers and their families depend, also require security of access to a sustainable resource to harvest;
- FAMILY FIRST acknowledges that Australia's forest industries are major employers and forestry employment has a significant flow-on effect throughout the community, especially in rural and regional areas;
- FAMILY FIRST believes that plantation forests have a legitimate and essential role in meeting Australia's wood product requirements. FAMILY FIRST also recognise that native forests supply high quality wood products suited for value adding such as furniture, flooring, craft and similar industries. Native forests, including those managed for wood production, provide better habitat and are better for environmental protection and species conservation;
- FAMILY FIRST recognise that Australia has a trade deficit in regards to wood products and much of the wood imported has been harvested in a manner that is not sustainable and is not harvested with the best environmental outcomes as achieved throughout Australia.
- FAMILY FIRST strongly supports the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (1997) and the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement (2005) as the best approach to striking a reasonable balance between competing interests and providing security for parties. Adjustments to these agreements must be subject to reasoned negotiation based on sound evidence.

Actions:

- FAMILY FIRST supports the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (1997) and the Tasmanian Community Forest Agreement (2005), with any adjustments to be negotiated on the basis of sound evidence;
- FAMILY FIRST proposes that any further forest reservation be based on sound scientific advice about the high conservation value of the forests concerned;
- FAMILY FIRST proposes that the merits of further reservations be assessed on the basis of their social and economic impact as well as their environmental impact;
- FAMILY FIRST proposes that, consistent with our environmental responsibilities and as a good world citizen, Australian forest industries should contribute to overcoming Australia's trade deficit in wood products thus minimizing the ecological damage currently occurring in other countries;
- FAMILY FIRST proposes that local value adding be maximised, with a high priority given to projects that replace wood chip exports;
- FAMILY FIRST supports selective logging so long as this can be achieved without degrading future productivity, species composition, wood quality and worker safety;
- FAMILY FIRST supports the use of clear felling where it is necessary to perpetuate a healthy, productive forest and to protect the safety of forest workers.