

Re RFA review

RFAs were put in place to balance and protect the full range of environmental, social, economic and heritage values. It must be obvious to all that they have failed to meet these objectives. They are out of date because many of the standards for the protection of ecosystems fall below international benchmarks. They don't even mention climate change and its potential impacts. The agreements pose a threat to many threatened species, they ignore the successive or cumulative impact of bushfire, even though there have been extensive fires in the last 10 years, and they ignore other forest values such as water, ecosystem services, recreation and tourism.

Rfas provide unjustified special treatment for native forest logging. Virtually all industries have to follow the law, yet regional forest agreements are exempt from national environmental laws. This is unreasonable and unsustainable on every level.

I recommend the following-

1/ The special treatment the timber industry this industry enjoys under the RFAs comes to an end. This includes the industry's extraordinary exemption from national environment laws. This is particularly important considering the industry's considerable impact on 'matters of national environmental significance' under the EPBC Act, such as nationally-listed threatened species.

2/ That forestry practices take into account forest-dependent industries such as conservation recreation, tourism, agriculture, water, and carbon in any arrangement or agreements going forward.

3/ That any plan going forward must strengthen management prescriptions for threatened species, climate change impacts, and fire.

4/ That any plan going forward must make substantial additions to the formal reserve system.

In my view RFAs should be abandoned and a transition plan put in place to move out of native forestry, in its current form.

Sincerely,

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