

Cecily. A. Edwards. B.F.A.  
[cecisassy@gmail.com](mailto:cecisassy@gmail.com)  
No Fixed Abode  
C/o West Hobart P.O. 7000  
Ph: 0409 149 072  
18-01-2013

SUBMISSION TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE  
REGARDING THE TASMANIAN FORESTS AGREEMENT

I respectfully request that you take time to give my submission consideration.

The destruction of World Heritage forests by industrial scale logging, has been apparently due to the failure of the negotiators that first drew up the World Heritage Area boundaries. I have so far been unable to establish whether this was due to gross oversight or gross failure to negotiate appropriately. Consequently what has ensued has been piecemeal battles to have protected that which was excluded, namely many of the big river valleys full of old growth forests, and the water catchments for those rivers. We have also consequently seen the most appalling mismanagement of our finite forest resources and irreparable damage to the integrity of the World Heritage Value ecological systems.

The exploitation of this situation has been by both the corporations of the industrial scale loggers and the corporate environmental non-government organisations, all of whom have profited ceaselessly and carelessly from the loss and suffering of the Tasmanian communities. This process of the elites playing out their insatiable land grab is offensive, oppressive, dysfunctional and untenable.

I remind the Tasmanian Government, Forestry Tasmania and their associates, also the corporate environmental non-government organisations, that the directing or misplacing of public assets into private or corporate hands by the Government and corporations is irresponsible and may have serious repercussions. We have seen an abysmal failure of corporate governance, and the problem of taxpayer funded corporate welfare, through subsidies, loans, tax breaks and enabling legislation, that has bankrupted this state both financially and morally, this is reprehensible.

As I have before submitted to the Legislative Council, we the electors, the Peoples of Tasmania bear the actual palpable Financial, Ecological, Social, Health and Infrastructure costs in the interest of private corporate profits, this is Unjust, Inequitable, Unconstitutional, Illegal and Immoral.

As a result of industrial scale forestry on this island we have seen ongoing problems and issues with; the wastage of vast volumes of special species timber, export deals, failed corporate governance, fiduciary failure, failure of due process, degraded infrastructure, work place health and safety, transport, extensive road building, road carnage both human and non-human, reduced public access to public forests for multiple uses, extinction of flora and fauna, degradation of soil, air and water quality,

use of poisons, erosion of rivers, desecration of Aboriginal heritage sites, destruction of sites of colonial historical interest, monoculture plantations and their impact on agriculture and rural communities and fires. These are just a few of the many and complex problems that the corporations have created, the ensuing liability of which is yet to be dealt with.

Forestry Tasmania's appalling so called 'regeneration' burns, plus the fires that are resulting from a fragmented landscape and the dangerous fuel load's left in coupes, together with the uncultivated monoculture plantations, provides a scenario for catastrophe. To add fuel to the fire, the forest industries by-products, such as pine mulch and woodchips are carelessly distributed throughout our community parks and gardens, increasing the massive fuel load on the ground and magnifying the potential fire risk this industry has created on our small island. The industry with big ideas now has a much smaller work force and apparently no budget with which to mitigate this dangerous volatile mess that they have created and continue to fail to deal with.

Our available stock of valuable native forest has rapidly shrunk in recent years due to the failure of foresight and good governance and the failure to earlier implement transition strategies. Planning for a low volume, non-industrial timber industry, in those remaining state forests outside protected areas, would see a return to smaller scale local sawmills and portable mills. This has always been part of many communities vision of transition with the low impact selective felling of mixed age mixed species timbers providing high employment forestry that has potential for local value adding and better environmental outcomes. Changes need to be made to the planting and management of plantations from monoculture to ecologically sustainable, diverse forests that are safe and useful to human and non-human communities and prime agricultural land must be preserved.

Tasmanian grass-roots forest defenders have for years advocated for the protection of many of our unique forest ecological systems, and have also advocated for the transition to non-industrial scale forestry. This would facilitate socially and economically feasible and viable alternatives that also would keep intact communities and the ecological systems those communities rely on. Far from being the extremists the spin doctors and public relations departments of the corporations and government would try to lead the community to believe, grass-roots environmental organisations are in fact moderate, and give due consideration to the needs of all the communities both human and non-human on this Island.

Corporate environmental non-government organisations through a process of usurpation and deception seek to coerce and manipulate grass roots community groups and campaigns to their own advantage. The career centred and profit-seeking agenda of corporate environmental non-government organisations fails to effectively accommodate the very real concerns and needs of the communities they purport to represent. Certainly the claims of corporate environmental non-government groups that they can control the response of the community to the

onslaught by the forest industry are unfounded and extortionate durability clauses are unrealistic and unviable.

There is no stopping the genuine human response to the continuation of man made disaster that diminishes our environment, our society and our future. The community will predictably continue to rally against inadequate education, health, housing and infrastructure provisions due to corporate welfare, and the failure to implement policies and strategies that provide safe and clean, working and living environments. Further there is no turning back the international tide of people from around the world who make their way here to witness, to monitor and if necessary to act, to assist the community deal with this crisis. People will continue to support and to practice participatory democracy, as is their right and many feel it is their duty.

I have a Duty of Care arising from my reciprocal relationship with my country and my kin and my community, therefore given the evidence I have seen and heard and experienced, I am obliged, with like minded people, to exercise precautionary measures to prevent and highlight any further destruction and degradation to our country and our kin and our communities. Arising from my many years of varied experience of non-violent direct action I have a Duty of Care, when requested by crew, to participate in relevant and appropriate non-violent direct action's as I am able, as my experience enables the safety and wellbeing of all involved.

I can testify that grass-roots direct action activists have nothing to personally gain and everything to lose. I live in a constant state of malnourished sleep deprivation as I strive to attend to the safety, health and well being of my family, my crew, my community and my country. I have been displaced and dispossessed countless times, more than I can remember and often traumatically. My family, and myself have often been subjected to cruel coercion and harassment from bureaucrats and police who fail to fulfil their duties impartially as civil servants. I am subjected to constant bullying in public places by ignorant and belligerent people who feel justified in their actions by the deceitful propaganda and rhetoric of the forest industry and their associates in governance. We are vilified, assaulted, subject to surveillance, overt and covert violence and overt and covert disadvantage.

Civil disobedience actions and subsequent court proceedings are about contesting the legality of the various corporations' contractors legal right to work, and seek to highlight the imperative for legislative review, which is necessary for a range of environmental and social issues, due to the lack of decent and diligent governance. There is an urgent need to review all relevant legislation and repeal that legislation which does not provide good governance and healthy outcomes for our communities and environment. Indeed, beside a review of adverse legislation, there also needs to be new legislation drafted that creates ecological justice and social justice and better serves the ethos of a democratic state. Legislative review must be undertaken, as part of the process of transition from redundant industrial scale forestry in forests with high conservation and World Heritage values and in a transition from monoculture plantations on prime agricultural land.

Current forestry practices on this Island are in contravention of International Conventions relating to the environment, health and indigenous and human rights. Further, there is evident failure to establish preservation of Aboriginal and colonizing cultural and heritage sites and World Heritage high conservation value forests in perpetuity.

Remediation of all adverse environmental and social impacts from industrial scale high volume logging and its consequences, which result in harm to our Island home, is an urgent necessity. The poisoning and degradation of our soil, air, water, and endangerment and extinction of flora and fauna are some of the many problems for which reparation and restitution may be sought.

Tasmania's brutal colonial history repeats itself again and again through the centuries. The mindset that endorses the exploitation and dispersal of many, for the benefit of few, to the detriment of our life sustaining ecological systems, is still prevalent. It is time to step into the twenty first century.

Yours Sincerely

Cecily. A. Edwards. B.F.A.  
Hobart, Tasmania.  
18-01-2013