

Minister for Business, Industry and Resources
Minister for Transport
Leader of the House

Level 10, Executive Building, 15 Murray Street, Hobart TAS 7000
GPO Box 123, Hobart TAS 7001
Phone: 03 6165 9405 | Email: Minister.Abetz@dpac.tas.gov.au



12 JUL 2024

Hon Mark Shelton MP
Email: mark.shelton@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mark

Thank you for your constituent question raised on behalf of your constituents, concerning native forest imports.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government is the strongest supporter of Tasmania's high-value native forestry industry.

Tasmania's native forest industry is sustainable, renewable, and world-leading.

The industry supports more than 5,700 direct and indirect jobs, not just in harvesting but across transport, associated support industries and sawmills around the State.

Tasmania's native forest on-island processing sector is currently under increasing supply pressures, due primarily to the actions of Labor and Greens both historically, and more recently.

This has included the halving of the production forest estate in 2011 under the disastrous Labor-Green forestry deal, and the more recent closure of native forest industries in both Western Australia and Victoria under Labor Governments.

This has led to increased interest and competition in our high-quality native forests from interstate processors, and embarrassingly, to the Victorian and Western Australian Labor governments, has led to massive increases – over 1500% - of imported native forest timber from the United States alone to mainland Australia.

So, far from meeting their stated goals of protecting native forests and protecting the climate, the Victorian and Western Australian Governments have simply transferred their issues to another jurisdiction, while increasing the carbon footprint of their timber usage (through significantly increased transport distances), reducing community resilience (by not buying local), and all the while decimating regional jobs and communities.

The Tasmanian Liberal Government will most certainly continue to support our native forestry sector. We have demonstrated this by committing to:

- Making available up to 40,000 hectares of the Future Potential Production Forest “wood bank”
- Making available an additional wood basket of up to 158,000 cubic metres of high quality sawlog to Tasmanian industry – an annual increase of up to 10 per cent
- Making this new supply available exclusively to existing Tasmanian customers
- Supporting our iconic special species timber sector
- Supercharging on-island processing with an additional \$5 million, and

- Extending long-term supply contracts - which currently expire in 2027 - to 2040 to secure local sawmillers' futures.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Eric Abetz', written in a cursive style.

Eric Abetz MP
Minister for Business, Industry and Resources