

The forum

Letters should be 150 words or less. Short letters will be given priority. Send letters to The Examiner, PO Box 99, or email editor@examiner.com.au. You can text us on 04274 FORUM

THE POINTS . . .

Obesity claims

NYE Evans (Letters, June 17) argues cogently that when there were no fat people there was plenty of hard physical work, it is not natural to exercise enough to burn off fat resulting from labour-saving devices and junk food is not to blame for obesity, "now that machines do all the work we can do little about it".

His argument flies in the face of too much contrary evidence; not only that provided by The Biggest Loser.

If calories in are less than calories out the result is weight loss.

It isn't necessary to "run 160 kilometres" and all around Mr Evans is physical evidence that he and others can accept greater responsibility for their own well-being and live happily within a healthy weight range.

Obesity falls into the same category as excessive consumption of alcohol and cigarettes as a cause of heart disease, diabetes and the resultant strain on our health system.

We tax cigarettes and alcohol why not junk food?

— KRISTIN INGLES, Launceston

Forest debate

WITH the extension of the forest debate deadline to July 2012, let's hope the negotiations prevent the locking up of more renewable native forest, and allow selective logging and mining in heritage areas.

Already sawmillers are finding it difficult to obtain quality sawlogs, and are finding obtaining markets

Room for more views in state forestry debate

By Todd Dudley, president, North-East Bioregional Network, St Helens.



HERE seem to be only two opinions being aired in the forest debate.

One, from the peak (and most) other conservation groups and the Greens, is that we should phase out native forest logging and move to a plantation-based industry.

The other is that the forest industry (in the form it has operated in over the past 20 years) is a model of sustainability and best practice management.

I disagree with both points of view, although I do support the IGA forest protection proposals of the environmental groups.

The conservation perspective appears to be a combination of two factors.

One is ideological opposition to native forest logging. The other is a response to the inability of the state and federal governments over decades to reform and properly regulate and manage the forest industry and timber resource in Tasmania.

On the other hand, the forest industry perspective is based on its



with a business-as-usual, self-regulatory approach.

The industry (and its supporters) do not want to acknowledge in particular that the scale of clearing, wood chipping and conversion of native forest to plantation carried out over the past 20-plus years has been ecologically destructive and unsustainable.

My view is that native forest logging is the most environmentally sound way to produce timber but only if it is carried out at an appropriate scale, length of rotation and with genuinely best practice methods.

To clarify this, taking into account the limited space available, scale would mean a smaller industry based on regional and local sawmillers supplying mostly — but not exclusively — local and regional needs, not a global woodchip market, length of rotation 100 years plus between each harvesting and selective logging with better protection of watercourses and threatened species and their habitat.

There is also an opportunity to

that has occurred over the past 20 years by starting a process of restoring vast areas that have been converted from native forest to plantation back to native forest when first rotation plantations are harvested.

As has been demonstrated at Skyline Tier at Scamander, first rotation plantations still contain a viable native seed bank that makes restoration of native forest very feasible.

Some of the restored areas would be protected if they have significant conservation values while other areas could be selectively harvested on long rotation.

The benefits of this would be that many of the displaced forest workers could transition straight into a landscape scale restoration industry where their valuable skills could be utilised.

Many areas would be eligible for carbon credits. It would also increase the areas of native forest available for timber harvesting.

The long-term solution to creating a sustainable forest industry in Tasmania is not moving from an industrial or global scale native forest logging to industrial scale plantation industry, but by a combination of reducing the scale and improving the practices of forest operations and large-scale restoration of native forests for conservation and selective

BRIEFLY

Azaria justice

DEPUTY Northern

Territory Coroner

Elizabeth Morris has concluded the death of Azaria Chamberlain was in fact a dingo attack while the family were on a camping holiday at Ayers Rock in 1980.

What I'm ashamed of is that Australia's justice system has taken 32 years to exonerate Lindy and Michael Chamberlain of their daughter's death, and by doing so has failed them completely. This couple have shown remarkable composure towards the Australian legal system after the verdict was announced confirming what they said 32 years ago was the truth. Australia owes them big time.

— ROBERT LEE Sumnerhill

Tower view

ERROL Stewart wants public land to build an inappropriate building for what? To make a lot of money for himself. This ugly proposal will do nothing to enhance Launceston. There are plenty of lovely vantage points in our city to admire a variety of views. Ask visitors what they love about Launceston and the majority will tell you how they love the architecture and the humane scale of the city. We need to work with our strengths, not against