



MEDIA RELEASE

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ENGO Response to Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement

The Australian Conservation Foundation, The Wilderness Society and Environment Tasmania believe the Tasmanian Forests Intergovernmental Agreement signed by Prime Minister Gillard and Premier Giddings provides a strong foundation to protect Tasmania's unique and important native forests and transition the logging industry away from native forests.

"We acknowledge the recent efforts of federal and state governments, including the Greens, to strengthen the level of certainty of protection of important native forests through a conservation agreement and other mechanisms," said Don Henry of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

"Community groups and many thousands of people across Tasmania and the globe have worked for decades to see Tassie's ancient forests protected, and this Intergovernmental Agreement marks a critical step towards their lasting protection for future generations," said Dr Phill Pullinger of Environment Tasmania,

"We recognise the tough circumstances forestry workers and some rural communities are living through during this difficult time of economic transition in Tasmania, and welcome the financial support for workers and contractors, and the regional economic diversification package provided through this agreement" said Dr Phill Pullinger.

"A key part of this agreement is a pathway to deliver the secure protection of unique and important native forests such as those in the Upper Florentine and Weld Valleys, the Tarkine, the Great Western Tiers, the North-East Highlands, including the Blue Tier, South Sister and the Eastern Tiers including Wielangta," said Vica Bayley of the Wilderness Society.

"While this isn't the end of the process and much work is still to be done, it provides a much more secure framework for full implementation of this once-in-a-generation opportunity. The key challenge will be the passage of legislative reforms and we are calling for tri-partisan and Legislative Council support for this agreement and the outcomes it offers," he concluded.

All three environment groups will continue to work with other signatories and government to finalise further details and deliver on the promise of this agreement and all of the principles embedded in the original Statement of Principles.

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Photos of Tasmania's High-Conservation Value Forests

High resolution photos for publication by Rob Blakers can be downloaded at:

<http://www.et.org.au/media-images-tf>