



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Forest protection must follow appointment of verification team

The Australian Conservation Foundation, The Wilderness Society and Environment Tasmania today welcomed the Tasmanian Government's announcement of appointments to the Independent Expert Group that will verify proposed forest reserves and wood supply requirements.

"These appointments are an important step towards legislatively protecting ancient forests set out in the Tasmanian Forest Intergovernmental Agreement," said Dr Phill Pullinger of Environment Tasmania.

The Independent Expert Group will assess: conservation values of native forests nominated for formal protection; wood supply requirements; availability of this supply from outside nominated protected areas; and modelling options for delivering both conservation and industry goals.

In line with the Intergovernmental Agreement, environment groups seek the urgent declaration of informal reserves and the signing of a Conservation Agreement over 430,000 hectares of nominated forests.

"Environmental signatories expect urgent rescheduling of current logging operations, the establishment of new informal reserves and for both governments to sign a conservation agreement to immediately protect the initial 430,000 hectares of unique and important native forests," said Vica Bayley of the Wilderness Society.

"We look forward to seeing this groundbreaking agreement deliver its environmental outcomes and will support and contribute to the Independent Expert Group's verification work," said Denise Boyd of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

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