



ET's position on Gunns' Proposed Tamar Valley Pulp Mill (Updated May 21 2011)

1. The currently proposed Gunns Tamar Valley pulp mill

Gunns' proposed pulp mill in the Tamar Valley would have lasting negative impacts on the environment, communities and the economy of Tasmania, and is not supported by Environment Tasmania.

The proposed Tamar Valley pulp mill would:

- Pollute the marine environment endangering unique wildlife and could lead to substantial job losses in the fishing industry.
- Damage Aboriginal sites where the mill is located and threatens Aboriginal culture.
- Be located in what a leading pulp mill scientist has described as the 'worst possible site'.
- According to the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Tasmanian branch, the pulp mill 'could cause an increase in the already existing morbidity and mortality from atmospheric pollutants'¹.
- Lead to greater job losses in other industries than would be created by the development according to the Tasmanian Business Roundtable for Sustainable Development.
- Be a major source of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Go against basic standards of assessment and governance. Gunns abandoned the independent pulp mill assessment and it was later revealed the head of that assessment has found the project information 'critically non-compliant'.
- Polarise the community; most residents in the Tamar Valley, and the majority of Australians, are opposed to Gunns' pulp mill.
- Have significant negative local socio-economic & community impacts.

¹ Australian Media Association (Tasmania) http://www.amatas.com.au/index.php?item=file&target=ama_position_statement_pulp_mill

2. Minimum Requirements for any new Tasmanian pulp mill

Environment Tasmania believes that there are better ways to utilise Tasmania's plantation resources than pulp. More jobs could be delivered through plantation timber being used for a range of other higher value products such as sawn timber, LVLs, OSB rotary veneer, etc. However, ET is not necessarily opposed to a pulp mill in Tasmania per se, and there are a number of minimum requirements that ET would expect for any proposal for a new pulp mill in Tasmania.

These minimum requirements would include:

- Full & rigorous independent assessment to community standards.
- Only based on plantation timber and able to be transitioned to recycled fibre.
- Of an appropriate scale to be supplied from a Tasmanian plantation resource base that is sustainably managed and acceptable to local communities.
- In an appropriate location that doesn't impact on human health or existing industries.
- Totally chlorine free (TCF) or thermo-mechanical, and closed-loop where technically possible.
- Able to use recycled fibre and alternative fibre sources.
- Capability to include paper production is preferred.

Environment Tasmania will not be able to support the Tamar Valley as an appropriate location for a new pulp mill in Tasmania. This is due to its unique amenity, the importance of the region as a wine, agriculture and tourism region, due to the antagonism towards the mill by the local community, and due to the unique air pollution problems posed by the Tamar Valley that make the valley an inappropriate location for a pulp mill.