



Hon Ruth Forrest MLC
Member for Murchison



Our ref: 02/21/20

24 August 2011

Jo McRae
Florentine Protection Society
PO Box 8
Sandy Bay TAS 7006

Dear Ms McRae

Thank you for your letter dated 17 August regarding the Tasmanian Forestry Inter-Governmental Agreement (TFIGA).

Many people have expressed a range of concerns around this issue since the signing of the TFIGA. I believe we can and should be able to provide for a mix of economic activities in this state including active native forest management and harvesting, plantations – for pulp if a market continues to exist and sawlog, mining, tourism and other industries that co-exist and that are sustainable and provide for economic, social and environmental benefits for the State. There does need to be change within the industry and we cannot just continue with business as usual. However, I also believe that it is wrong and irresponsible to force a dramatic and sudden change on any industry through Government decisions that will have a serious economic impact on any industry sector without a well planned and properly implemented strategy to minimise the adverse impacts. I personally do not believe the TFIGA achieves that.

Whilst I agree that some of these factors have been considered, to me it appears we will be acting irresponsibly, especially at this current time in light of the economic climate we face, to be proceeding with the proposed action in the absence of other industry to support the state's economy and precarious budget situation. This is particularly the case if further areas of forest are reserved and the funding that has been suggested under the IGA is and will be inadequate to manage these reserved areas – leading to potentially an even worse environmental outcome.

Rest assured I will be very carefully scrutinising any legislation that comes before the Parliament – either as a Bill or by way of regulation – to ensure, as much as I can, that this balance can be achieved. I believe that we must not accept a promise of financial support that will go no way to providing compensation for the loss of assets of this State if further areas of native forest are reserved. I believe this is also an issue as the review of the areas to be

reserved will now occur after the areas have all been reserved – a direct reversal of the position agreed to through the Statement of Principles discussions and changes made to surety of supply for some existing businesses was also changed in this process. Unfortunately these last minute changes have not assisted in this whole process.

I do welcome your comments and thank you for taking the time to express them.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Forrest', written in a cursive style.

Hon Ruth Forrest MLC

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR MURCHISON