



# Lynn MacLaren MLC

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Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
Perth WA 6000  
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Dear Mr O'Brien

## **Petition No. 74 - Mowen Forest Logging**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the petition on logging in Mowen Forest. The number of signatures, 1 596 in total, demonstrates the widespread public concern over the logging of this native forest between Margaret River and Nannup.

The Forest Products Commission has plans to log 1 610 hectares of Mowen Forest, yet this is intended to take place before proper consideration of the current values of the forest, and before a financial account of forestry operations in Mowen.

I call for a full public inquiry including public hearings. I also call for the cessation of logging activities until such an inquiry concludes.

## **Loss of habitat for threatened species**

Mowen Forest provides important nesting and feeding habitat for various threatened species, including the Forest Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo, Baudin's Cockatoo, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Orange-Bellied Frog and Quokka. The numbers of Baudin's Cockatoo, for example, have declined rapidly due to loss of suitable habitat and only 12 500 adults remain. Logging and the spread of dieback will further reduce the available habitat for these threatened species.

If logging were to take place in Mowen coups 1 and 2, there would be no account of biodiversity loss. A current on-ground fauna survey has not been conducted in the forest. Additionally, the available desktop information on species numbers and habitat requirements is out-dated and not specific to the areas to be logged. With the state of available information, it is not possible to ensure that the survival of threatened species wouldn't be further endangered by logging jarrah and marri in Mowen.

### **Lack of sustainable forest management**

By their own account, the Conservation Commission and the Forest Products Commission lack proper guidance on the sustainable management of WA's forests. In response to my question without notice No. 1343 of 26 November 2014, it was revealed that several guiding documents key to the management of forests and logging operations have yet to be completed. These include *Goals for Understorey Diversity*, due 31 December 2005, *Forest Monitoring Guidelines*, also due 31 December 2005, and *Phytophthora Cinnamomi and disease caused by it*, to have been reviewed by 31 December 2008.

The management practices agreed to by the Conservation Commission in the preparation of the current and previous Forest Management Plans are being ignored while logging continues.

### **No anticipated income**

The government has not provided adequate estimations of income from logging Mowen Forest. In response to my question without notice No. 1390 of 2 December 2014, the Minister for Forestry stated that 'the Forest Products Commission does not assess profit on an individual coupe basis.'

Further responses to questions in parliament revealed disclosed costs for logging Mowen One and Two of \$216,500, for road construction, dieback surveys and flora surveys. However, the government has not disclosed fieldwork costs for the completion of dieback demarcation, old-growth forest assessment, old-growth forest boundary demarcation and treemarking for retention.

Many other costs of native forest logging are not debited to the forestry industry. These include the cost to the Conservation Commission in preparing the Forest Management Plans and the auditing of their implementation, along with the cost of trying to prevent the introduction and spread of *Phytophthora Cinnamomi* dieback through logging operations.

It is difficult to see how the Forest Products Commission will generate a net income from the logging of Mowen Forest. Additionally, it would appear that the government is simply subsidising an unsustainable industry.

### **Public consultation**

Despite several requests from forest conservation stakeholders to meet with the Minister for Forestry, the Minister has not consulted with these organisations. In response to my question on notice No. 1662 of 21 October 2014, it was revealed that the Minister has met with 12 forestry stakeholders in 2014. The call for a full public inquiry into logging is even more relevant considering the Minister's lack of consultation with community organisations.

Kind regards



Hon Lynn MacLaren MLC  
Member for South Metropolitan Region  
16 December 2014