

NATIVE FOREST TIMBER INDUSTRY

Petition

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [10.02 am]: I present an e-petition containing 946 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned ...

are dismayed at the government's decision to close the sustainable native forest timber industry. This industry worth \$240 million annually has been in continuous operation for 150 years whilst maintaining the full biodiversity of our forests along with a range of other uses including recreation and water.

This decision was made:

1. without considering the science demonstrating the sustainability of forest timber production, including government agency reports;
2. without examining the costs and benefits of forest industries;
3. without assessing the effect on people and communities, particularly in regional areas;
4. without examining other options for achieving the government's objective.
5. without transparency as this was made only six months after an election when the policy change was not mentioned.

We request that the following be examined:

* the science, actual monitoring and assessment to support or contradict the WA government claims including that climate change has caused a decline in availability of native forest timber, that timber harvesting is a threat to forest biodiversity, that ending harvesting will protect WA forests and that climate change impacts are best managed by ceasing timber harvesting.

* the costs and benefits from the change in policy;

* the forest product requirements of Western Australia, and the alternative resources available to substitute for the native timber foregone;

* the policy options available to the government to achieve its objectives without closing the existing timber industry

* the policy treatment of mining in forests compared to the timber industry

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray

[See paper 1714.]