

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### New report details loss of social license for native forest woodchip industry

An alliance of environment groups has today released [a report](#) entitled 'Social License Chipped Away: why support for woodchipping has collapsed in south-east NSW'. The report launch coincides with candidate forums being hosted this weekend in Merimbula and Bermagui, where public concern over logging is likely to feature heavily.

Social license is a vital component of an industry's ability to operate because, although not a formal license, it describes how the public receives and values an industry. The report argues that any social license woodchipping may once have had is long gone.

The report<sup>1</sup> details how the three key elements of social license (legitimacy, trust and credibility) have all been fatally undermined by actions and rhetoric of the woodchip industry and its political champions.

The primary author of the report, **Harriett Swift of South East Region Conservation Alliance** said: "The entire woodchip industry is built on a lie: that woodchipping uses only the left-over wood from sawmilling. Locals have known that's not true for about 50 years. Over 85% of all trees logged in the Eden area are chipped and more and more operations are yielding 100% pulplogs<sup>2</sup>. Industry claims are simply not credible and few believe them."

**Mr Peter Robertson of The Wilderness Society** said: "Under current inter-government agreements, the logging industry gets special treatment in relation to its environmental impacts. It continually breaches its inadequate environmental protections with near-impunity thanks to the exclusion of the public from bringing legal action against the industry under NSW law. The legitimacy of the industry is fatally undermined by the cosy deals. These deals must be scrapped and a full overhaul of national environmental law occur."

**Dr Oisín Sweeney of the National Parks Association of NSW** said: "Trust in the native forest logging industry is in tatters. The public opposition to destructive new logging deals and logging laws was completely ignored by government in favour of a pre-determined of ongoing logging no matter what the environmental and social cost. So much so that the Forestry Corporation was negotiating new wood supply agreements while the so-called consultation was ongoing. This is a protected industry not subject to the norms of market forces and public opinion."

**Ms Daisy Barham of the Nature Conservation Council** said: "Native forest logging is acting in concert with rising rates of deforestation on private land to create a perfect storm. Koalas are on track to become extinct in parts of NSW by 2050 and scores of other forest species are threatened. Ending native forest logging is essential to ending the extinction crisis."

The report comes shortly after [revelations in the Sydney Morning Herald](#) showed a strong majority of people oppose native forest logging in every State and Territory in Australia. **ENDS**

**Media contacts:** Harriett Swift: 0414 908 997; Peter Robertson: 0409 089 020; Oisín Sweeney: 0431 251 194; Daisy Barham: 0402 335 664

<sup>1</sup>Access report here: <https://npansw.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Social-License-Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>A pulplog is a small-diameter lower quality log unsuitable for saw milling for higher-value timber products