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Open letter to all candidates for Eden-Monaro

Dear Candidate

Social license of the native forest logging industry

As a candidate for Eden-Monaro in the coming election, we wish to draw your attention to recent evidence for the loss of the social license of the native forest logging industry.

Research conducted over the past few months, including a major industry funded project is overwhelmingly showing us that the industry has lost public acceptance.

Three major national surveys and one local survey establish beyond doubt that the vast majority of Australians, including those in your electorate want to see an end to native forest logging.

“Community perceptions of Australia’s forest, wood and paper industries: implications for social license to operate,” August 2018¹ is based on responses by some 12,000 Australians across all States and Territories in urban and rural areas. It was undertaken by University of Canberra academics on behalf of Forest and Wood Products Australia (FWPA).²

Native forest logging was strongly opposed by some 70% of Australians in urban and rural areas, all age groups, genders and education and income levels. Opposition to native forest logging varied only slightly from State to State. *See attachment.*

For the region which includes most of the Eden-Monaro electorate, opposition to native forest logging was higher than for NSW as a whole and very close to the national average.

	% who responded that native forest logging is unacceptable
South Coast & Southern Inland *	68
NSW rural	65
Australia	70

* includes Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Snowy Monaro Regional, Wingecarribee, Wollondilly and Wollongong.

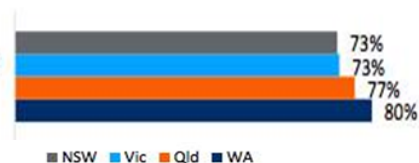
¹ The report has not yet been officially released but references include “Bush turns its back on support for logging native forest” https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/bush-turns-its-back-on-support-for-logging-native-forests-20181113-p50frc.html?fbclid=IwAR18Lq4QWlmdl_2zZe3mz72kDSJc3mi0UHCahJXw9IE5OtETnv3x2KKyo3I

² <https://www.fwpa.com.au/>

Further, while in most areas with a significant native forest industry, opposition to it was slightly less than the average. **In our area, opposition was *higher* than average.**

A Facebook poll of 28,000 respondents conducted by ABC Gippsland in November 2018 showed that 68% of Australians answered “no” to the question: *do you support logging of native forests in regional Australia?*³

In April 2019, a survey⁴ of 1,536 undertaken by The Australia Institute asked: *To what extent do you support or oppose stopping any more native forest logging and reforesting other areas?* The results ranged between 73% for NSW and 80% for WA.



A poll undertaken in April 2019 in the neighbouring Gilmore electorate⁵ showed very similar results.

Native forest logging has been a controversial issue in our region for many decades, especially since the establishment of the Eden woodchip mill.

Surely this clearly states the will of the majority of Australians. If you wish to read more on this matter, we recommend the report, *Social license chipped away*⁶.

We would be happy to meet with you and discuss any aspect of this matter should you wish.

Yours sincerely

Harriett Swift

Deputy Convener

³ <https://www.facebook.com/ABCGippsland/posts/do-you-support-the-logging-of-native-forests-in-regional-australia/10156329787589825/>

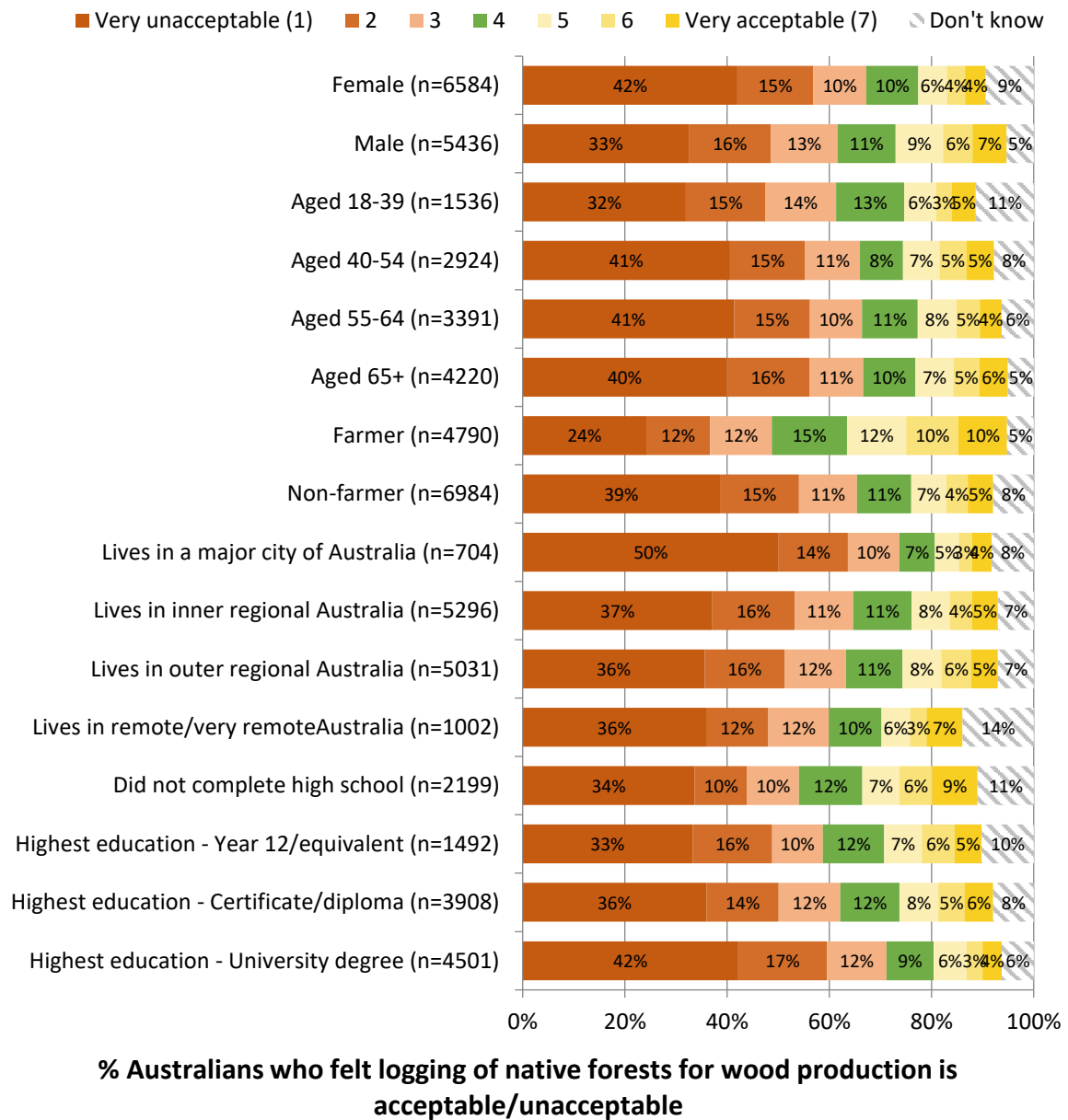
⁴ *Polling – Support for climate action across states.* <http://tiny.cc/dwql5y>

⁵ https://www.kiamaindependent.com.au/story/6083708/polliies-must-tackle-this-issue/?cs=12%20https://www.ipbes.net/sites/default/files/downloads/summary_for_policymakers_ipbes_global_assessment.pdf

⁶ <https://npansw.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Social-License-Report.pdf>

Attachment

Acceptability of logging of native forests for wood production by different socio-demographic groups⁷



⁷ "Community perceptions of Australia's forest, wood and paper industries: implications for social license to operate," August 2018 Figure A8, p. 77