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## Consultation – Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the review of the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS). Private Forests Tasmania (PFT) has read the draft STRLUS and other supporting documents and can provide the following feedback.

PFT is an independent statutory authority established under the Tasmanian Private Forests Act 1994. We work to facilitate and expand the sustainable growth and development of the private forest resource in Tasmania. We do this through providing information to private forest growers, through research collaborations, advocacy, innovation and planning tools. Under our Corporate Plan 2025-28 one of our four goals is to work with policy makers and regulators to improve regulatory efficiency and practical policy settings for private forestry.

As stated on page 8 of the draft STRLUS in the Implementation Statement, *'the STRLUS applies the Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPPs) as relevant to strategic planning in the Southern Tasmania Region'...and...'the STRLUS is primarily implemented through the Local Provisions Schedules (LPSs) of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme'*. The current batch of LPS's in the Southern Region have been made without the benefit and guidance of having the TPP's in place (due to commence 1 July 2026) or the revised STRLUS's. As such, many of the LPS's have inconsistently applied zones and codes on land dedicated for forestry purposes. For example, Private Timber Reserves (PTRs), which are areas of private land set aside to establish forests or grow or harvest timber in accordance with the Forest Practices Code, are often zoned such that forestry is a discretionary or in some cases prohibited use under that zoning. This has caused considerable concern for our private forest owner stakeholders who have PTR's registered over their forests. Whilst PFT acknowledges that forestry activities on a PTR are exempt from the planning scheme, the zoning of land can influence public perceptions of what is an appropriate use of land, and land dedicated for forestry use that is zoned inappropriately will only cause confusion and is used as an argument by some that the land should not be used for forestry, despite the rigorous assessments that led to the dedication.

Unfortunately, the strategy outlined in section 3.4.2.2(b) of the draft STRLUS appears to exacerbate this problem. The wording of 3.4.2.2(b) is ambiguous at best, but it does appear to encourage local government planners when preparing their LPS's to zone land dedicated for a forestry purpose such that it enables other

new alternative industries to develop on that land because forestry is in *'decline'*. It also states that forestry is an extractive industry. This strategy is very problematic on three fronts. Firstly, TPP 4.2 *Timber Production*, clearly intends for the protection of timber production areas, where land dedicated for timber production, and surrounding lands, are appropriately zoned and coded. Secondly, forestry is not an extractive industry. Extractive industries remove non-renewable raw materials from the earth, whereas forestry produces an essential renewable product – timber – and then regrows the forest after harvesting. Thirdly, forestry is not in decline, this is an unsubstantiated assertion, and it is contrary to state and national policies to grow the industry, particularly the plantation sector<sup>1</sup>.

Forestry will also play a key role in meeting Tasmania's ambitious carbon emission reduction targets as detailed in Tasmania's Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2025<sup>2</sup>. Carbon forestry is emerging as a driver of change, particularly influencing the establishment of new and longer rotation plantations. From 2020 to 2024, over 24,800 hectares of private freehold land was registered for carbon forestry projects in Tasmania under the Australian Government's Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme (PFT Annual Report 2025<sup>3</sup>). The forestry sector will also provide the timber to build the 10 000 new social and affordable homes by 2032 as part of Tasmania's Housing Strategy 2023-2043<sup>4</sup>.

PFT strongly recommends that the STRLUS applies the intent of the TPP's, particularly TPP 4.2 *Timber Production*, to ensure land dedicated for timber production, and surrounding lands, are appropriately zoned and coded, and that it refrains from making incorrect assertions about forestry that contradict state and national policies.

PFT also takes issue with the wording of strategy 3.4.2.2(a), that *'forestry in existing State Forests and Private Timber Reserves will alter landscape character and visual amenity'*. These areas are not insignificant. The land dedicated to a forestry purpose in the Southern Tasmania Region makes up nearly 386,000 hectares – on public land this is 282,000 hectares of Permanent Timber Production Zone (PTPZ) land, and on private land 104,000 hectares of PTRs. That is 16.5% of the land area for the entire Region is dedicated to producing timber from sustainably managed plantation and native forest. These significant areas, whilst their primary purpose is timber production, are managed in accordance with the strict requirements of Tasmania's forest practices system and contain multiple other values – biodiversity, water quality, recreation opportunities, aesthetic qualities and carbon sequestration and storage values – as well as timber. Forestry as an activity consists of geographically and temporally dispersed timber harvesting operations. Native forest is harvested on rotations of approximately 80 years and plantations from 15-30 years. Any visual impact from harvesting is dispersed across the landscape and through time and has no greater impacts on landscape character or visual amenity than any other rural based industry sector.

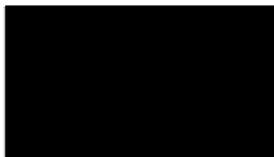
Total wood production from Tasmanian forests for 2024-25 was over 4.1 million tonnes across all forest product types. Public forests accounted for 1.3 million tonnes while private forests produced 2.8 million tonnes. The forestry industry is a major employer and economic contributor in the Region. In a report on the socio-economic impacts of the forestry sector, Schirmer et.al (2018)<sup>5</sup> found that the total annual value of

output contributed by the forest industry to the Southern Region was \$424.7 million and which employed a total of 1,903 full time equivalent jobs. This contributed \$113 million to household income within the Southern Region alone. These figures from the Schirmer report are from 2015-16 financial year, so the contribution of the forestry sector to the socio-economic wellbeing of the Region would be even greater now.

Sustainable forestry produces the ultimate renewable material – timber. Timber, through a tree’s ability to regenerate and re-grow while sequestering and storing carbon, makes it one of the most important environmental materials of the future. PFT urges the State Planning Office to recognise the significant role for forestry in the future of the Southern Region. This should be reflected in the next draft of the STRLUS. PFT looks forward to making further contributions as the Strategy is developed.

If you have any queries on the points we have raised, please contact me on [REDACTED] or our Policy & Data Officer Murray Root on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



**Dr Elizabeth Pietrzykowski**  
CEO Private Forests Tasmania

<sup>1</sup>Australian Government Forestry Growth Initiatives <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/forestry>  
Tasmanian Government Forestry Growth Initiatives  
[https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/about/divisions/Renewables,\\_Climate\\_and\\_Future\\_Industries\\_Tasmania\\_and\\_resources/forestry](https://www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au/about/divisions/Renewables,_Climate_and_Future_Industries_Tasmania_and_resources/forestry)

<sup>2</sup>Tasmania’s Climate Change Action Plan 2023-2025,  
[https://www.recfit.tas.gov.au/what\\_is\\_recfit/climate\\_change/action\\_plan/2023-25](https://www.recfit.tas.gov.au/what_is_recfit/climate_change/action_plan/2023-25)

<sup>3</sup>Private Forests Tasmania Annual Report 2025, <https://pft.tas.gov.au/annual-reports>

<sup>4</sup>Tasmania’s Housing Strategy 2023-2043,  
[https://www.tasmanianhousingstrategy.tas.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/600944/230265\\_Homes\\_Tas\\_Strategy\\_document\\_wcag.pdf](https://www.tasmanianhousingstrategy.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/600944/230265_Homes_Tas_Strategy_document_wcag.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>Schirmer, J. Mylek, M. Magnusson, A. Yabsley, B. & Morison, J. (2018) Socio-economic impacts of the forest industry - Tasmania. Report prepared for Forest and Wood Products Australia and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, [https://fwpa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Socio\\_economic\\_impacts\\_of\\_the\\_forest\\_industry\\_TAS.pdf](https://fwpa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Socio_economic_impacts_of_the_forest_industry_TAS.pdf)