

Media Release

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MURRINDINDI COUNCIL TIMBER NIMBYISM APPALLING

Murrindindi Council's decision last night to seek a ban on forest harvesting in Rubicon State Forest is a clear case of "not in my backyard" and shows an appalling lack of understanding of the sustainable native forest industry in Victoria.

"The Victorian Government has set aside over 4 million hectares of forests for conservation and biodiversity protection," said Deb Kerr, the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA).

"Native hardwood operations occur within small areas in multiple use forests where ecological and cultural values are protected."

"Harvesting of high value hardwood timbers in native forests occurs on just 0.04 percent of forests annually – or four trees harvested for every 10,000 trees and every tree is replanted meaning the Victorian forestry industry is sustainable in every sense of the word."

Ms Kerr said, "It is a simplistic notion and just not feasible for the native forest sector to transition to plantations in a decade particularly as the plantations do not exist."

"Unfortunately the Council has fallen for the Victorian Government's spin when it pretends there will be a 'transition' from native timber to plantations in ten years. It takes up to 80 years for such trees to grow and the Victorian Government has not planted one seedling which would produce appearance grade hardwood trees."

"The only transition which will take place under the current plan is a transition to imported hardwoods from other nations – and inevitably some will come from places where they practice deforestation," concluded Ms Kerr.

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