

## Media Release

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### DELWP is failing Victoria's threatened species

The Government has decided that stopping native timber harvesting should deliver outcomes for the environment, protected species, and climate change. The ['Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity'](#) report, however, clearly shows the Government is failing in its responsibilities to the environment while deciding that native forestry must end.

Released by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office today, the report is scathing of DELWP's management of Victoria's biodiversity and its ongoing decline. According to the report, "DELWP cannot demonstrate if, or how well, it is halting further decline." The report notes that data used by DELWP in its models is old, likely outdated and has critical gaps raising questions about the reliability of outcomes and thus decision-making. It further states that DELWP "lacks performance indicators and reporting to demonstrate the impact of its management interventions on halting the decline of threatened species."

How, then, can the State Government assess what works and what doesn't when it comes to forest management? Importantly, the Victorian community must rightly question the Government's approach with over 7 million hectares of public land supposedly set aside to achieve biodiversity outcomes.

"Native forestry supports the Government's objectives to sequester carbon as well as critically endangered wildlife like the Leadbeater's Possum," said Chief Executive Officer of VFPA Deb Kerr.

According to a paper presented yesterday at the Forestry Australia National Conference in Launceston, native forestry coupes provide enduring feeding habitats for these critically endangered possums around 15-20 years post-harvest. Moreover, the Leadbeater's Possum's habitat is protected under the Code of Practice for Timber Production. Harvesting is prohibited in areas where the possum is detected. .

"It is obvious that a new management approach is needed if the Government's own department is failing our most precious endangered species.

"Like Indigenous Australians who actively managed our forests over eons, management of our entire public land through multiple uses will be critical to their survival - as opposed to environmentalists who champion their anthropological view that wilderness through a 'lock up and leave' approach", concluded Ms Kerr.

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**About**

The Victorian Forest Products Association (VFPA) represents all elements of the value chain from both sustainable harvesting of plantations and multiple-use natural forest resources. VFPA is a policy development and advocacy group which represents the interests of Victoria's sustainable forestry. We collaborate strongly with other industry bodies to ensure the best outcomes for forestry in general and our members more specifically. Our charter provides autonomy to manage State issues. We cooperate with the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) on any issues that transcend State borders and have National implications.

VFPA represents forest growers, harvesters,  
and manufacturers of timber and paper products.