

# The Institute of Foresters of Australia

ABN 48 083 197 586



16 November 2008

Premier John Brumby  
Office of the Premier  
1 Treasury Place  
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Sir

We, the undersigned, are forest scientists concerned with sustainable management of the river red gum ecosystem and its dependent communities.

We strongly disagree with the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) recommendation for the placement of 90% of existing State forest into the Park system as it will not achieve the economic, environmental or social outcomes required under the VEAC charter for the investigation.

We see the biggest threat to the river red gum ecosystem as being the lack of ecologically appropriate flooding. Simply placing these forests into the Park system will clearly not address this issue.

The constantly evolving river red gum systems reflect thousands of years of flooding and drying cycles and indigenous activities to support their lifestyle such as burning parts of the forest, elaborate systems of fish traps and using the forest for a variety of food, plant and wood-based products.

The past 150 years have shown accelerated changes, particularly human induced changes to natural flood sequences, compounded by long term drought which has often been detrimental to forest health. State forest currently managed for biodiversity and economic activities such as timber harvesting, hunting and grazing under strong regulatory control, currently contributes significantly to the regional economy. At present the VEAC recommendations support large scale conversion of State forest to Park however there are no measures in place to see if social, environmental or economic objectives are ever met.

We therefore support improved flooding regimes, continued indigenous involvement in management, carefully planned and implemented selective harvesting, thinning and other adaptive management techniques, to allow



genuine meeting of biodiversity and economic outcomes for all Victorians and especially the dependent communities. We believe that sustainable management of State forest in balance with parks is the best way forward to achieve these outcomes.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Ryan  
Chair IFA Victorian Division

CC: Hon. Jacinta Allan  
Hon. Joe Helper  
Hon. Gavin Jennings

Dr Rob Campbell  
Ronald Hateley  
Shaun Lawlor  
Ross Runnalls  
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