

## **Bega District Letters to the Editor, 14 May 19**

<https://www.begadistrictnews.com.au/story/6120969/letters-loss-of-social-license-of-native-forest-logging-industry/>

### **Social license of logging**

#### **Open letter to federal election candidates**

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 the industry has lost public acceptance.

Three major national surveys and one local survey establish beyond doubt 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 2018 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).

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.

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.

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?

In April 2019, a survey of 1536 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 electorate 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.

**Harriett Swift, deputy convener Chipstop.**