

09.09.2024 Media release

## **Rogue Forestry Corps are destroying our forests. Time for the Federal Government to step up**

**Attributable to Dr Sophie Scamps, Federal member for Mackellar**

Today I am calling on the Environment Minister, Tanya Plibersek, to take urgent action to save the Aussie bush and the unique animals which call it home.

There is a gaping loophole in our environment laws that means that state forestry logging operations do not need federal approval. These operations often result in logging of mature native forest, loss of den trees and food sources for endangered native animals, such as our iconic koalas, greater gliders and swift parrots.

State regulators are clearly failing to effectively rein in rogue state forestry corporations.

Since January 2020, the NSW Environment Protection Agency has issued 31 warnings, 13 penalty notices, 5 stop work orders and 8 prosecutions against the Forestry Corporation NSW. Additionally, there are currently 17 investigations, with 4 prosecutions ongoing.

In the last four years NSW Forestry Corp has paid more than \$1.67 million in fines. But that figure does not include the huge cost to EPA of investigating and enforcing the forestry rules.

It's madness to have one government body spending millions of dollars to chase another, and a huge waste of taxpayer dollars.

In July this year, the NSW Land and Environment Court said NSW Forestry Corp had "a pattern of environmental offending" and "does not accept the true extent of harm that it has caused by its offending".

The reviewer of our national environment laws, Graeme Samuel said the exemption should end.

This is an intolerable situation, and it needs to end right now. We can't wait. The Federal Environment Minister must immediately take action to bring the logging of state forests within her control.

That's why I have launched a petition to save the Aussie bush, and I want everyone who enjoys the outdoors to sign it.

**Attributable to Geoff Cousins, forest campaigner and business leader**

I am very concerned about the criminal behaviour of NSW Forestry Corporation and I have repeatedly pointed it out to the NSW government, the shareholder. The NSW government

has committed to the Great Koala National Park. It should immediately stop logging in those areas publicly identified for the park.

The Federal Minister is cut out of any role in protecting endangered species, like the koala, from the impacts of logging due to the operation of the Regional Forest Agreements. That is just untenable.

**Professor David Lindenmayer, Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU**

If we stop logging and land clearing now, we will reach our greenhouse gas emission targets in 2030.

Why, in 2024, are we deliberately driving threatened species like the Greater Glider and the Swift Parrot to extinction? It is totally contrary to the commitments that our government has made in international treaties.

I also do not understand why, in a climate crisis, we are making our forests more flammable by thinning them through logging. This puts at risk not just threatened species but the regional communities who live adjacent to forests.

**Attributable to Senator David Pocock, Independent Senator from the ACT**

The federal government has committed to no new extinctions. They have no chance of keeping that promise if we continue to destroy endangered species' habitat.

The Prime Minister confirmed last week that promised reforms of our broken environmental laws now won't be delivered in this term of parliament.

At a bare minimum we need to act now, through legislation currently before the senate, to remove the regional forest agreements exemption from our national environmental laws.

This extremely modest amendment would just mean that native forest logging is subject to assessment under federal environment law, because currently it is not.

The government has committed to applying national environmental laws to areas under Regional Forestry Agreements. In an extinction crisis there is not a moment to spare to follow through on this promise.

If we can't even agree on this one small change, what possible hope do we have of halting extinctions on our megadiverse continent?

**Dr Monique Ryan, MP for Kooyong**

The Victorian government claims to have ended harvesting of state forests on 1 January 2024.

In fact, logging of Victorian native forests continues under the auspices of timber utilisation plans and salvage logging. This has repeatedly resulted in the documented loss of endangered species, such as the greater glider recently killed by Victorian Department of Environment tree-felling.

Our state governments can't be trusted to responsibly oversee native forest protections. We've seen this again and again. We look to Tanya Plibersek to show the leadership we need, to intervene and protect Australia's irreplaceable native forests and the species dependent upon them.

[LINK](#) - VNR to share with media.

[LINK](#) - stills Ripper drone/pilot, Greater Gliders, Map of logging

Attachment: – NSW list of prosecutions, breaches stop work orders.

Further information: Anne Davies 0408223875.

### **Advanced Drone Tech to save endangered species**

Ripper Corp have worked in this area of wildlife for over 8 years now, surveying species from Koalas, Greater Gliders, Kangaroos, Wallabies and Powerful Owls to mention a few, he said.

We have conducted survey in the Styx River, Tuggolo, Bulga and Dingo Forest areas in the last 3 weeks for a number of community based organisations who are alarmed at the fact logging is about to commence in these areas. The Ripper drones found 298 Greater Gliders in these areas to be logged.

It is concerning that the tech is there to save these species, through quick, efficient and reliable surveys. It is distressing that this tech is not being used by government with independent, competent and professional providers to protect these endangered species.

"The impact of Ripper Corporation's drone technology on conservation efforts is profound. By using drones, we're not only improving the accuracy of our wildlife surveys but also making a significant contribution to the protection of endangered species and their habitats," said Jamie Holyoak, Chief Pilot at Ripper Corp.

"The technology is quick efficient and scientifically based and does not impact on the animals. We use sophisticated infrared sensors carried on our big Ripper drones, to locate and count the animals, he said. We fly at night, so our sensors can quickly and accurately find the animals."

### **About Ripper Corporation**

Ripper Corp is dedicated to using our advanced drone technology to gather critical insights for environmental protection and conservation. Our team is passionate about developing and deploying tech-enabled drones for monitoring wildlife movements, habitat changes, and supporting land and water management practices. Our mission is to protect what is precious

to all of us—our environment, wildlife, and communities—by providing our clients with the tools to make informed, impactful decisions. [www.rippercorp.com](http://www.rippercorp.com)

Ripper Corporation is one of Australia's leading drone services company. Ripper Corporation was integral in introducing and adapting the use of search and rescue drones into Australia across the beach and surf life saving rescue area in 2015. A Little Ripper drone was the first drone in the world to successfully perform an aquatic rescue, saving 2 young boys at Fingal Head in 2018.

Ripper Corp is now taking its world pioneering drone search and rescue learnings from the Beach to the Bush.