

# MEDIA RELEASE

## New report calls for forest action in Victoria's Strathbogies

A new report has recommended protection of the forests of the Strathbogie Ranges in new conservation reserves. The report has been funded by local communities in north-east Victoria frustrated at the lack of action by the Andrews government.

Local trucking company owner and spokesperson for Save Our Strathbogie Forest, Shirley Saywell, said 'the Strathbogie Forest is being wrecked by logging and local communities and businesses have had enough. The Andrews government is not listening to regional communities, and we fear the loss of forests and threatened species which support local tourism and visitors to our region'

The report recommends the following:

- That the Andrews Government enable the formal protection of the Strathbogie Forest under the National Parks Act, encompassing all of the existing State Forest and other associated public land, as part of its election commitments in 2018.
- The statewide significance of these forests for meeting National Reserve System targets, Victorian Government protection commitments and for the future survival of the nationally endangered Greater Glider possum population requires their urgent protection in a conservation reserve.
- Formal protection of these forests for nature conservation also helps demonstrate the commitment of the Andrews Government to land settlement agreements being negotiated with the Taungerong Clans.

'The Andrews government has the [worst record of any Victorian Government](#) over the past sixty years in declaring new national parks', she said. The Government has been in a forests policy vacuum for 4 years, in the meantime allowing known habitat for threatened animals to continue to be trashed by its state-owned forestry business. It's time to protect the Strathbogie Forest as part of a comprehensive policy to protect wildlife, forests and valuable tourism economies in our region.

A decision to protect the Strathbogie Forest by the Coalition or Labor, as part of a forests and conservation policy, prior to the November election would receive strong support from communities across our region. It will demonstrate furthermore that regional communities' forest concerns are being listened to. It will also provide opportunities for new jobs and economic growth in regional Victoria.

### Important facts:

- The [Victorian Coalition committed](#) to a Victorian Environmental Assessment Council investigation into Strathbogie forests before the 2014 election.

- 74% of native forest in the Strathbogrie Ranges has been cleared, with less than 2% of the Strathbogrie Ranges permanently protected in formal conservation reserves.
- At 24,000 ha, it is the largest block of Public Land in the Strathbogries.
- The Strathbogrie Forest is of statewide significance for the Greater Glider possum, listed as a threatened species under the federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. The forest has one of the healthiest Greater Glider populations known in all Victoria.

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