

FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION — ANNUAL REPORT

Statement

HON DIANE EVERS (South West) [5.35 pm]: I rise only briefly to comment on the Forest Products Commission annual report that was tabled yesterday. This may be the first time I will talk about this report but it will not be the last. I hope it inspires members to come along to the annual report hearings during the estimates week in November. As members know, I have been talking about the forests since I have been a member of Parliament. I would like to point out to everyone that this year the Forest Products Commission has posted a \$1.6 million loss before tax. The Forest Products Commission is losing money. Wait, sorry—I do not want to get that wrong; that is off the native timber. If I can take a step back, the whole organisation made a profit this year of \$1.1 million. That includes a \$3 million positive revaluation of our plantations. We are making money and funding the state off the growth of pine trees. What a great idea—let us grow more pine trees! If we can make money to fund our state by growing trees, it is a great idea, but it was a revaluation that put this agency into the black.

Members hear me talking about native forests and other people talk about them often. A lot of people in Western Australia care an awful lot about our native timber industry or our native forests. Right now we are operating that at a \$1.6 million loss before tax. We cut down a whole lot of trees, we sell them and we lose money. It makes one wonder. That is something I would like us to look at over the coming year. It is a real shame that we are not even valuing the health of that forest as it stands.

I would like to point out one other thing about this. I do not know the reasons why, and I will put some questions forward on this, but there is no revaluation of our native forests. To me, that raises the issue: is it possible that no revaluation is recorded because it is a negative amount? An organisation would not want to record a negative amount on forests because they are supposed to be growing, getting larger and providing more income as they are cut down. However, that may not be happening because now we have a revaluation of our plantation industry as well as our sandalwood industry, but no revaluation of native forest timber. Take this as the beginning. We have to change how we look at our forests. We have to start looking at forest regeneration. We need more forests to stop the demise of our planet through climate change. I look forward to speaking more on this at a later date.

House adjourned at 5.38 pm
