

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN — ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AUTHORITY CONCERNS

836. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the Environmental Protection Authority's advice that it is "most unlikely" that continued logging in the low and medium rainfall zones in the south west forests will be capable of meeting ecologically sustainable forest management objectives and that the current forest management plan is riddled with major governance and compliance problems. The overview of the EPA report reads —

The current statutory roles of the Conservation Commission, the Department of Conservation and Environment (DEC) and the Forest Products Commission (FPC) are not effective in ensuring delivery of and compliance with the approved FMP.

- (1) Has the minister read the EPA report?
- (2) Has the minister discussed the EPA report with the Minister for Forestry?
- (3) Does the minister dispute the EPA's finding that the sustainable harvesting of native forest is not being carried out in accordance with the FMP, partly because key guidelines have not been completed and approved and partly because of the dysfunctional relationship between her department and the Forest Products Commission?
- (4) Does the minister consider that deferring consideration of the EPA's recommendations until the preparation of the next forest management plan in 2014 is an adequate response to the EPA's call for an urgent rethink of our logging practices in south west forests?

The PRESIDENT: In relation to that question, and to some other questions, I invite members to have another good look at standing order 140, which refers to imputations and inferences. Several parts of the member's question stretch the borders.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)–(2) Yes.
- (3)–(4) In response to question without notice 780 asked on 13 October 2010, I informed the house that I support the sustainable harvesting of native forest carried out in accordance with the forest management plan. The EPA's advice outlined in bulletin 1362, which also referred to rainfall and governance, will be considered in the preparation of the next forest management plan. That is consistent with the EPA's advice.

With respect to the completion of the guidelines, I am advised that field compliance has not been significantly impacted because operations have adhered to the combination of pre-existing guidance documents and the forest management plan. I can, however, advise the house that since the Conservation Commission report to the EPA, two of the three guidelines that the commission considered needed to be completed as a priority have been approved, and the third is in the final stage of revision in response to public comments.

I do not agree—I refer to the President's comments—that the relationship between DEC and the Forest Products Commission is dysfunctional. That was not identified by the EPA in its advice, as implied by the member's question.