



Bee Industry Council of Western Australia

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Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC
 Chair
 Legislative Council Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
 Legislative Council Committee Office
 Parliament House
 4 Harvest Terrace
 West Perth WA 6005

by email: lcco@parliament.wa.gov.au

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Bee Industry Council of WA I wish to ask the Committee on Environment and Public Affairs to conduct a full investigation into a range of options to achieve the most effective and timely protection of High Conservation Value forests and to enable a rapid transition into sustainable timber production. These options could include:

- Informing itself of the current independent research into the health of the South West forests and the environmental, social and economic impacts of current management practices.
- Identifying the extent of the remaining unprotected High Conservation Value forests by commissioning an independent review of the forests in the South West.
- Investigating what role and support the Government can provide in transitioning the timber industry from Native Forest Logging into Farm Forestry, including investigating examples of successful transitions in other jurisdictions and examining the cost benefits of establishing farm forestry
- Recommending that the EPA audit this year's review of the implementation of the Forest Management Plan (FMP) to provide a rigorous independent assessment of the environmental impact of the FMP.
- Recommending that there be an immediate moratorium on logging of High Conservation Value forests while the Committee conducts its enquiry.

80% of WA honeybee products come from the WA native State forests. The pollens in these flowers are very good nutritionally which results in healthy happy bees. These bees play an integral part in the pollination of crops with currently over 70% of the food we consume being pollinated by bees, a \$ 1.5 billion-dollar industry in WA alone. There are approx. 200 Jarrah sites with a potential farmgate value of \$30 million in a flowering year, Jarrah flowers every 2 years.

It can take 25-30yrs from seed to blossom for a mature Jarrah tree to produce the honey required to replace logged trees. A 200yo jarrah will produce far more nectar than a 30yo one as they have finished growing and will put their energy into reproducing. Other native forest trees that our industry relies upon are Marri, (Redgum), Blackbutt, Bull Banksia, Dryandra and newly discovered species of leptospermum. Logging of these forests is not sustainable. When a beekeeper uses a native forest bee site for their managed bees, minimal disruption is caused to the environment. Our footprint is extremely low, yet we leave behind a pollinated good healthy living forest. Western Australian native forests and bush don't have the disease, pollution and contamination issues that are plaguing the rest of the world, this opens up unique marketing opportunities for high value, food safe high-quality honey bee products. As a biennial crop which was due to flower this year, jarrah honey is getting rarer and is a more sought-after product than some of the state's more reliable Eucalypt crops. It also has the same, if not better, medicinal qualities as Manuka honey making it a highly desirable product. Jarrah honey is high in antioxidants, does not crystallise and being a dark honey with a distinct unique taste, it is favoured by a lot of overseas consumers. However, this potential growth in this industry is being put in further jeopardy due to the logging of forests and burning of apiary sites, which has created headaches for beekeepers and devastated this year's crop.

Beekeeping is one of the most sustainable agribusiness industries, which ticks all the boxes for jobs and growth in regional areas, but by constantly burning and logging this resource, the State Government is jeopardising this small but important and valuable industry, with massive growth potential.

The honey industry just received a \$7 million CRC grant for amongst other things, a forest resource management plan for honey bee products. Chopping trees down and burning them are not in that plan.

The honey industry plans to employ 1000s more beekeepers and other support industries over the next 10 years. This is a labour intensive (job creating) sustainable industry that must be supported and has the potential to generate millions of export dollars for Australia.

Thank you for taking the time to take further consideration on this subject.

Yours faithfully,

Leilani Leyland

Secretary