



Minister for the Environment and Tourism
Minister for Science and Innovation

Our Ref: CTS 22890/24
Your Ref: 4183-24

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13 January 2025

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Neil

Thank you for your email of 12 December 2024 in relation to Parliamentary Petition No. 4183-24 concerning the cessation of native timber harvesting in the South East Queensland Regional Plan Area and protection of critical ecosystems within Deongwar State Forest.

The Crisafulli Government remains committed to the protection of Queensland's unique biodiversity and the growth of our protected area estate and has committed to developing the Queensland Timber Action Plan within a year of forming Government. Further consideration of the use of State forests, and former State forests, will be considered as this Plan is developed.

I would also note that the Government is focussed on expanding ecotourism and nature-based tourism, an objective which relies upon the protection and sustainable management of our natural areas. This objective is consistent with an approach that prioritises conservation and sustainable use.

The process to convert areas to protected area tenure, led by the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, requires the completion of several steps including careful consideration of the regional ecosystems and threatened species located in the areas, assessment of cultural values and analysis of current and future uses of the areas including consultation with impacted parties. These considerations all play a key role in informing the future tenure of the areas – that is, whether they are dedicated as national parks, conservation parks, resource reserves, or remain as State forest to meet the ongoing timber needs to house the growing Queensland population.

Detailed assessments are also required to evaluate any competing interests over State forests which are deemed inconsistent uses under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* and may impact the ability to add them to the protected area estate, such as rolling term grazing leases or mining and exploration leases issued under the *Lands Act 1994*. These assessments are undertaken in negotiation with other local and State government agencies who either authorise activities over these areas or have management obligations, such as the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development.

Assessment and negotiation processes regarding the potential future tenure, use and management of Deongwar State Forest continue to be a priority for the Government.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Powell MP
Minister for the Environment and Tourism and
Minister for Science and Innovation