

MEDIA RELEASE



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“NSW Government listens to rural communities!”

Timber Communities Australia (TCA) the national grassroots community organisation, representing more than 13,000 members, congratulates Ian Macdonald, the NSW Minister for Natural Resources, on his decision to withdraw the draft code of practice for Private Native Forestry.

The code, released for public exhibition 4 weeks ago, was the first piece of regulation by any government in Australia that explicitly denied landowners the right to carry out an existing land use.

Timber Communities Australia, Australian Forest Growers, NSW Forest Products Association and the NSW Farmers Association worked together and provided an effective voice for rural communities in expressing their opposition to the code.

“The groundswell of community opposition to the draft code clearly demonstrates just how out of touch with community expectations the bureaucrats who drafted the code are, said Peter Lezaich”, TCA NSW State Manager said today.

TCA is cautiously optimistic that the Government is genuine in its stated aim to develop a code of practice that will deliver sustainable outcomes.

However for this to be achieved the Government must first provide clear and concise guidelines to all genuine stakeholders on what is expected of them. It is **NOT** acceptable that green groups deliberately take an obstructionist role in the process.

Green groups who continuously stonewalled the development of the original code and their stubborn refusal to engage in meaningful discussions with other stakeholders were the primary reasons that the original stakeholder group was disbanded.

“One would really have to question the legitimacy of the green groups to be considered as stakeholders in this process, said Peter Lezaich today. Clearly they have no financial interest in the land in question, they are not the ones repaying mortgages, and running farm businesses.”

TCA thanks the thousands of people who over the last four weeks attended community meetings across the state and took the time to lodge a submission and voice their opposition to the draft code of practice and the manner in which it was released.

Ends

Peter Lezaich, Timber Communities Australia, NSW State Manager, 0427 211 406