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MEDIA RELEASE
FEDERAL CABINET MUST HONOUR 2004 ELECTION PROMISE TO
TIMBER DEPENDENT FAMILIES

At the last Federal Election Prime Minister John Howard acted to increase Tasmania's reservation of high conservation value old growth to one million hectares, at the same time he also confirmed a future for timber dependent communities via investment in timber plantations.

Tasmania's timber dependent communities now calls on the Federal Cabinet to up hold the PM's commitment to ensure the social and economic benefits promised for regional and rural communities are protected.

In promising jobs and a future for timber dependent communities, the Prime Minister made a deal with the State Government to permanently maintain native forest at 95% of the 1996 areas, which is 3,046,887.5 ha of native forest never to be converted to farms, towns or plantations.

The conservation commitment has been met with over 44% of Tasmania's land mass will always be native forests.

"We now ask that all Cabinet members do not forget their commitment to timber families, because trees do grow communities" Mr Barry Chipman, State Manager of Timber Communities Australia said today.

"We have been told for the past 20 years, each time more forest has been reserved for conservation, that the future is in plantations, therefore it is time for Government follow through and make good on the commitment to provide that future for timber families",

Plantation forestry has and can provide a positive future for rural communities. For the Federal Government's Plantation 2020 Vision to have meaning it must maintain the Managed Investment Schemes (MIS)

"TCA wholeheartedly supports Plantation Forestry MIS and the many positive benefits that flow through to our members and their communities as a result".

"Trees are great for communities, families, people and jobs.

"The Federal Government must insure that city folk can continue to invest in sustainable timber production that provide that promised future for timber dependent communities." Mr Chipman concluded.

Ends for more information contact Barry Chipman, 0417 013 336