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## High time for Government leadership on forestry

Following the extraordinary developments of last week - including the sale of the Triabunna woodchip mill to a business consortium whose aim is to close the mill - it is high time for the Government to stand up and take control of the future of Tasmania's important forest industry.

Since May last year, when the former Premier Mr Bartlett decided to contract out responsibility for forest policy to an unelected group of big business, big conservation and big union, Tasmania's forest industry has been dying a slow death. Investment in the industry has stalled due to the uncertainty and jobs have been lost.

Tasmania's native forest industry is too important to the state to be dictated to by a select, unelected group with vested political and commercial interests. The forest industry is worth \$1.4 billion annually to Tasmania and supports more than 6,000 jobs around the state. Our forests are owned by the people of Tasmania and it should be the people - through their Parliament - who determine its future.

The Liberals have never supported the disastrous Statement of Principles process and we predicted it would lead to the shutting down of the forestry industry. Sadly, we are being proven correct.

Yes, the forest industry does have some challenges and change is inevitable following Gunns' commercial decision to exit native forestry. But closing it down, costing thousands of jobs and destroying regional communities in the process is not the answer.

We announced a balanced 13 point plan for the forest sector late last year - [available here](#) - designed to secure jobs and grow the industry while also allowing for improved environmental outcomes.

I call on the Premier to show some leadership, take control, throw off the shackles of Nick McKim and the Greens and rip-up the disastrous Statement of Principles. She will have our support in doing so and our 13-point plan as a vision and a blueprint for the future of our important forest industry.

Will Hodgman

Leader of the Opposition

In other news

## Just call an election, Lara



The Leader of the Opposition, Will Hodgman, today used the last day of Parliament before the winter recess to demand that Lara Giddings call an election.

[Read More](#)

## Canal estates

The rejection by the Legislative Council of the Green-Labor Government's proposed canal estate ban is welcome, and vindicates our opposition to the ban.

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