



Friends of the Tamar Valley Inc
Email • friendsofthetamarvalley@gmail.com
Post • PO Box 5181 Launceston TAS 7250

MEDIA RELEASE

13/04/2012

What part of ‘no social licence ever’ for Gunns’ pulp mill do politicians not understand?

Community group Friends of the Tamar Valley today criticised federal politicians Tony Abbott and Simon Crean for their misleading comments that suggest a ‘social licence’ for the proposed pulp mill will be an automatic condition of the state’s controversial forestry agreement currently under negotiation.

FTV said three national environmental groups – The Wilderness Society, Australian Conservation Foundation and Environmental Tasmania - were invited to participate in the forestry discussions designed to end native forest logging in Tasmania. However, none of the community groups that oppose Gunns’ proposed Tamar Valley pulp mill had ever been included in negotiations, so either Mr Abbott and Mr Crean had been poorly advised, or they were being deliberately misleading in their remarks that linked the success of the Intergovernmental Forestry Agreement with community support for the pulp mill.

“The proposed pulp mill will never be accepted by the community that will be obliged to live with the foul odours, noise pollution, and toxic, poisonous emissions it will produce on a daily basis, and it is completely wrong of Mr Abbott and Mr Crean to state otherwise,” said FTV spokesperson Anne Layton-Bennett.

“Gunns’ proposed pulp mill and the IGA are entirely separate issues, so it is both inaccurate and mischievously misleading for Mr Abbott and Mr Crean to suggest otherwise.”

“Mr Abbott may like to claim the mill has undergone stringent environmental assessments, but he should be aware it has been consistently and repeatedly condemned by the broad scientific community as being dangerously flawed, and environmentally harmful. The risks to human health from the mill especially are huge, and an independent risk assessment has never been undertaken,” Ms Layton-Bennett said.

“Before saying he won’t rule out providing federal government funding for the pulp mill should a Liberal government be elected, Mr Abbott needs to remember that lack of public support for the pulp mill has been evident in the results of every poll and survey ever taken, while the risks associated with allocating taxpayer funding for the project were clearly set out several years ago by the Economic Unit of the Federal Government’s own Environment Department.”

“The Richard Chandler Corporation understood the financial, political and environmental risks associated with the pulp mill, and it walked away very quickly, yet eight years on Gunns and our politicians still don’t get it. The project was flawed from the start, but once Gunns withdrew from the independent planning process, and was found to be complicit in the previous state government’s fast-tracked approval process, community trust was completely lost.”

“It’s about time that all federal and state politicians - regardless of their party affiliations – understood why the community will never accept the pulp mill being built in the Tamar Valley, and why Tasmanians will never stop fighting to stop it ever being built,” Ms Layton-Bennett concluded.

For further information contact: Anne Layton-Bennett Ph: 6328 1231 mob: 0429 221 243

References:

<http://tapvision.info/node/413><http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/notices/assessments/2007/3385/pubs/att-b9.pdf> (page 4)

