

Coalition of environmentalists calls on Premier Jacinta Allan to abolish VicForests

ABC Ballarat / By Rochelle Kirkham
Posted Thu 5 Oct 2023 at 2:20pm



Environmental organisations want VicForests abolished and for an overhaul of management strategies. (Supplied: Wilderness Society)

abc.net.au/news/calls-for-vicforests-to-... [Copy link](#) [Share article](#)

Sixty Victorian not-for-profit organisations have written to Premier Jacinta Allan and Treasurer Tim Pallas to urge them to abolish state-owned logging business VicForests.

They say the organisation has outlived its purpose and lost public support.

"VicForests has systematically breached the public's trust and abjectly failed Victorians on every measure — economically, socially and environmentally," the letter says.

Last year the Supreme Court found VicForests [broke the law in failing to protect endangered species](#) and last week in a new case the court [ordered a halt to work in Wombat State Forest](#).

The Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner found in August [VicForests hired a private investigator to spy on environmentalists](#).

A government spokesperson told the ABC the future of VicForests was being considered, but no decision had been made on the organisation's fate.

The ABC understands the organisations that sent the letter have not received responses from Ms Allan or Mr Pallas.



The Supreme Court found VicForests broke the law by failing to protect endangered gliders in Gippsland and Central Victoria. (Supplied: Elizabeth Parsons)

'They have lost all credibility'

The ABC understands the Victorian government is reviewing VicForests' functions and activities ahead of the [end of native forest logging by January 1](#).

Matthew Landolfo, campaign manager at Wilderness Society, one of the letter's signatories, said VicForests did not deserve a seat at the table when it came to future planning.

"They have lost all credibility," he said.

The ABC understands VicForests will continue operating on a contractual basis beyond December 31 in order to undertake Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action land management operations.

It is understood part of the government's review is to determine how VicForests staff may be redeployed.



Environmentalists in a logged forest at Toolangi. (Supplied: Teresa Hu)

'Not naive to the challenge'

The letter calls on the government to partner with traditional owners, environmental organisations, scientists and the broader community when planning the management of Victoria's native forests.

"We're not naive to the challenge ahead in protecting people, property, wildlife, and our iconic forest landscapes from degradation and extreme weather events," Mr Landolfo said.

"But it's also a huge opportunity to rebuild public trust, generate employment in the regions and work in partnership with traditional owners who have cared for country for millennia."



Environmental groups want a major rethink on the management of native forests. (Supplied: GECCO)

The Victorian government reclassified VicForests from a state business corporation to a "reorganising body" on September 5, which removed the requirement for it to be commercially focused.

A decision on VicForests' future is expected to be made later this year.

ABC Ballarat — local news in your inbox

Get our local newsletter, delivered free each Wednesday

Enter your email address [SUBSCRIBE](#)

Your information is being handled in accordance with the [ABC Privacy Collection Statement](#).

This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

Posted 5 Oct 2023

Share [Link](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Share](#)

Related Stories

- [Court order calls halt to VicForests logging in western Victorian forest](#)
- [VicForests logged 'without knowing where gliders live' and failed to protect them, court finds](#)
- [Habitat of endangered possum illegally chopped down by state logging company, audit finds](#)

More on: [BALLARAT](#) [FORESTS](#) [STATE AND TERRITORY GOVERNMENT](#)

Top Stories

'Shocking' weapons investments uncovered in Australia's most ethical super

[Analysis by Patricia Karvelas](#)

Crisis talks at The Lodge sealed Fatima Payman's penalty but she has won an unlikely ally

[LIVE](#)

Samantha Mostyn has been sworn in as governor-general

New prices, solar charges, and government support all mean your power bill will be changing today

A bunch of new laws come into effect today. See how they could affect you

Suspended for her Palestine vote, Labor's Fatima Payman is isolated from colleagues but has pockets of support

Bruce Highway 'full of potholes' where fatal bus crash occurred in north Queensland, says local MP

Millions watched as Jill tried to quit vaping. Then something unexpected happened

'It was truly abandoned': Decommissioned Antarctic base a pollution risk as French team calls on Australia to clean up

[Analysis by Peter Martin](#)

What Australia's economy will look like in a year, according to 29 top forecasters

Stocks that shot to the Moon, and companies that tanked: Our end of financial year review

Government begins counting murdered women as three killed in as many days

Bilby DNA blueprint may help save iconic Australian animal from extinction

[Analysis by Adele Ferguson](#)

An inquiry into ASIC drops this week and insiders say the findings are brutal

Renters issued with no-fault eviction notices in NSW struggle to find homes amid rental crisis

Popular Now

Don't miss news that matters to you. Log in to ABC today to get a more personalised experience tailored to your preferences.

[GET STARTED](#)

1. 'Shocking' weapons investments uncovered in Australia's most ethical super

2. A bunch of new laws come into effect today. See how they could affect you

3. [Analysis by Patricia Karvelas](#)

Crisis talks at The Lodge sealed Fatima Payman's penalty but she has won an unlikely ally

4. Millions watched as Jill tried to quit vaping. Then something unexpected happened

5. New prices, solar charges, and government support all mean your power bill will be changing today

6. 'It was truly abandoned': Decommissioned Antarctic base a pollution risk as French team calls on Australia to clean up

Top Stories

1. 'Shocking' weapons investments uncovered in Australia's most ethical super

2. [Analysis by Patricia Karvelas](#)

Crisis talks at The Lodge sealed Fatima Payman's penalty but she has won an unlikely ally

3. [LIVE](#)

Samantha Mostyn has been sworn in as governor-general

4. New prices, solar charges, and government support all mean your power bill will be changing today

5. A bunch of new laws come into effect today. See how they could affect you

Just In

Suspended for her Palestine vote, Labor's Fatima Payman is isolated from colleagues but has pockets of support

42m ago

Bilby DNA blueprint may help save iconic Australian animal from extinction

1h ago

'This job is gonna kill me': Why one of Australia's most popular playwrights keeps writing

1h ago

Five quick hits — An all-time great goal keeps England alive at the Euros as 16-year-old Spanish wonderkid equals Ronaldo record

1h ago

[More Just In](#)

[Back to top](#)

NEWS

More From ABC NEWS

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, learn, and work.

- SECTIONS
- ABC NEWS
- WATCH LIVE
- WORLD
- ANALYSIS
- SCIENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- FACT CHECK
- JUST IN
- POLITICS
- BUSINESS
- SPORT
- HEALTH
- LIFESTYLE
- OTHER

- NEWS IN LANGUAGE
- 中文
- BERITA BAHASA INDONESIA
- TOK PISIN
- MORE FROM ABC NEWS
- Contact ABC NEWS

- CONNECT WITH ABC NEWS
- FACEBOOK
- INSTAGRAM
- YOUTUBE
- APPLE NEWS
- X (FORMERLY TWITTER)

This service may include material from Agence France Presse (AFP), APTN, Reuters, AAP, CNN and the BBC World Service which is copyright and cannot be reproduced.
AEST = Australian Eastern Standard Time which is 10 hours ahead of GMT (Greenwich Mean Time)