

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



New report on forest certification in Tasmania

A new study has revealed the attitudes and intentions of Tasmania's private forest owners towards forest certification.

The report found several factors, including cost and the potential for further restrictions on land, hinder the take-up of certification by non-industrial private growers.

The report was prepared for Private Forests Tasmania and conducted by Associate Professor Robyn Eversole and Dr Lain Dare, from UTAS' Institute for Regional Development (IRD).

"Forest certification is an increasingly important tool for commercial forest management, and is recognised as a legitimate form of governance for forestry activities," Dr Dare said.

"The report provides policy makers and forest managers with an understanding of Tasmania's private forest owners' knowledge of forest certification and their attitudes towards it.

"This includes an understanding of the key barriers private forest owners face in certifying their forest and potential solutions to such barriers."

Dr Dare said the report found a high proportion of the State's private forest owners have little understanding of forest certification, and were unwilling to certify given the current uncertainty surrounding the Tasmanian forest industry.

"Barriers to forest certification included the costs associated with forest certification, the perceived lack of tangible benefits for forest owners, and the potential for forest certification to enforce further restrictions on land and/or forest management practices," Dr Dare said.

"Current Tasmanian forest negotiations are encouraging the certification of more of Tasmania's forests. However, the current lack of interest of private forest owners to certify their forest restricts the capacity for greater areas to be certified.

"This highlights the need for more effort to be placed in education and communication with private forest growers regarding forest certification.

“In addition, the development of a Tasmanian forest certification framework provides an opportunity for collaboration among policy makers, forest managers and private forest owners to ensure such a framework is realistic and implementable given the diversity of objectives private forest owners have for their forest.”

To read the entire report, visit the IRD website:

<https://secure.utas.edu.au/ird/whats-new-@-ird/news-items/new-research-report-on-forest-certification>

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