



MEDIA RELEASE

12<sup>th</sup> September 2018

## **WA Forest Alliance slams Forest Management Plan review as “an exercise in rubber-stamping extinction”**

The mid-term review of logging and burning under the Forest Management Plan (FMP) has been released in draft form for six weeks of public comment - with WA Forest Alliance convener Jess Beckerling slamming it as an exercise in rubber-stamping extinction.

“Rather than a genuine science-based reappraisal of the leftover Barnett government-era forest management policies, this review represents the McGowan government rubber-stamping increased logging at the expense of forests, wildlife, biodiversity and communities,” she said.

“This review has a critically important function. It is supposed to check whether targets are being met and forests, wildlife and biodiversity are being conserved.

### ***DBCA scientists ignored***

“Instead, the review has ignored cries from within the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation’s own ranks for high conservation value forests to be assessed and protected. It’s just business-as-usual for the logging and burning of the South-West’s Global Biodiversity Hotspot forests - and business-as-usual is destroying forests and pushing threatened wildlife to extinction.”

### ***“Temporarily-displaced” means rendered extinct***

She said the review’s description of threatened wildlife including Forest Black Cockatoos and the critically endangered Western Ringtail Possum losing their habitat as being “temporarily displaced” was absurd bureaucrat-speak, and flew in the face of the science: “Unfortunately the review shows that DBCA is ignoring the science – including from within their own agency - in the interests of propping up the timber industry,” she said.

“The review is based on data and reports that either don’t exist or are inadequate for the task,” said Ms Beckerling. “The Conservation and Parks Commission, which oversees the review, reports that it has been unable to draw conclusions on fundamental points including whether Forest Black Cockatoos are being adequately protected in logging operations because of a lack of information provided by DBCA.

### ***Threatened wildlife losing critical habitat***

“The science and Wafa’s community forest surveys show without a shadow of doubt that threatened wildlife are losing critical habitat during logging operations. You can’t clear-fell and burn an ancient karri forest known to be home to threatened wildlife and not destroy their habitat,” she said, “It’s like saying hospitals can function without doctors and nurses. It’s ludicrous.”

“This is not ‘temporarily displacing’ threatened species. It’s pushing them past the point of recovery.”

### ***Critical knowledge gaps in DBCA need addressing immediately***

“There is certainly a lack of adequate scientific analysis, and we agree that better systems must be put in place for the next Forest Management Plan, but forests and endangered wildlife can’t wait another five years for things to change.

“DBCA has been fully aware of its own ‘critical knowledge gaps’ and the need to assess and protect high conservation value forests. Its own regional nature conservation teams have been raising these alarms at least for the past three years.

“It is time for action, not excuses,” said Ms Beckerling.

**Note:** Wafa has a brief backgrounder on the issues that we are happy to provide on request.

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