

MEDIA RELEASE

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Government can't be trusted on timber sale

Contrary to a promise by Premier Rann, Treasurer Kevin Foley has confirmed that the sale of the South East's timber assets will go ahead despite widespread community outrage.

In Parliament today, he said;

"This Government is committed to getting this sale right..." (Hansard, 11/11/10)

The Treasurer's comments undermine Premier Rann's earlier promise that the Government would not sell the forests if the proposal was found to be against the interests of the State and the South East.

Shadow Forestry Minister, Adrian Pederick said the Rann Labor Government's plan to forward-sell up to 111 years of timber growth has caused great concern and confusion in the South East where the industry contributes 30 per cent of the regional economy and returns tens of millions of dollars to the state.

"In parliament on Wednesday the Forestry Minister Michael O'Brien categorically refused to reconsider the plan to forward sell the timber regardless of the findings of a Regional Impact Statement (RIS)," Mr Pederick said.

"Surely the findings of an RIS would be invaluable in determining which option to pursue – or if indeed the sale should proceed at all.

"We've been demanding the Government make a clear statement on its intentions with the proposed sale ever since the Treasurer raised it in December 2008.

"Last month we had the Treasurer and the Forestry Minister contradicting each other on radio about whether or not the decision had been made and today the Treasurer is contradicting the Premier about whether the sale will go definitely ahead.

'South Australians do not know who to believe. It's obvious none of them can be trusted; not the Premier, not the Treasurer, not the Minister.'