

# SUBMISSION COVER SHEET

## Victorian Regional Forest Agreements third five-yearly review

It is **important** to note this cover sheet **must** be completed and **accompany any submission** on the third five-yearly review.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	My submission should <b>NOT</b> be published on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website.

### PLEASE COMPLETE:

<b>Name:</b> <i>(first name and surname)</i>	John Pettigrew
<b>Name of organisation:</b> <i>(only if representing an organisation)</i>	Goulburn Valley Environment Group
<b>Position in organisation:</b> <i>(only if representing an organisation)</i>	President
<b>Phone number:</b> <i>(only if submitting by post)</i>	
<b>Email address:</b> <b>OR</b> <b>Postal address:</b>	j.m.pettigrew@bigpond.com

In providing a submission, you agree that:

- unless you indicate otherwise above (or as otherwise determined by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning), your submission will be placed on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website and will remain on the website indefinitely

- the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and/or the independent reviewer can contact you about your submission
- for published submissions from individuals, your name and state/territory will be published with your submission. All other contact details will be removed from your submission
- for published submissions from organisations, your name and your organisation's details will be published with your submission.

Your submission and completed cover sheet can be submitted by email to [rfa.review@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:rfa.review@delwp.vic.gov.au) or by post to:

RFA Review - Submission  
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning  
PO Box 500  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Phone Enquiries can be made to 136 186

**Please note that submissions received after close of business on 29 January 2018 may not be accepted. Submissions provided without a completed cover sheet will not be accepted.**

To whom it may concern,

I write regarding progress with implementation of the Victorian Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2014.

The RFAs sought to balance and protect the full range of environmental, social, economic and heritage values. However the Victorian RFAs have comprehensively failed to meet these objectives.

RFAs are out of date and not fit for purpose. They have failed environmentally, socially and economically, and must not be extended, or rolled over.

It's time for a fundamental reset. Twenty years on from the signing of the RFAs, much has changed.

Under RFAs, logging exceeds sustained yields; wildlife are hurtling towards extinction; and the last green, unburnt tracts of forest are earmarked for logging, depriving other forest-dependent industries of the opportunity to provide employment and economic benefit to regional Victoria.

This overdue, mandated five-yearly review provides the opportunity to modify the Victorian RFAs, which expire from March 2018.

As president of the Goulburn Valley Environment group (GVEG) I recommend the following modifications, at a minimum:

- End the native forest logging industry's exemption from national environment law.
- Strengthen management prescriptions for threatened species, particularly the now EPBC listed Greater Glider which faces extinction as a result of poor forest management;
- Make substantial additions to the formal reserve system, using the criteria established for the National Reserve System (NRS) and the same level of formal protection as required for other protected areas included in the NRS.

Looking forward, the looming expiration of the RFAs provides a once-in-two-decades opportunity to put in place improved and modern arrangements for management of Victoria's precious publicly owned state forests—ones based on current science, and on community views about how our state forests should be valued, used and managed.

Future forest management needs to be fairer, and actually deliver benefits for all Australians, not just the over-subsidised native forest logging sector.

Other forest-dependent industries—such as conservation recreation, tourism, agriculture, water and carbon—must be accounted for in any forest management arrangements going forward.

It is unjustifiable for the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to extend or rollover the RFAs, which have led to destructive and unsustainable native forest logging, because their failings are so many.

This overdue five-yearly review ought to recommend the RFAs be abandoned. Instead, RFAs should be replaced with arrangements that ensure natural and cultural values are protected, and which support the completion of the industry's shift into less-controversial plantation and recycled fibre—rather than entrenching unsustainable native forest logging.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Pettigrew', written in a cursive style.

John Pettigrew  
GVEG President