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4 December 2022

The Honourable Tanya Plibersek MP
Minister for the Environment and Water
PO Box 6022
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area – Ongoing process to designate Future Potential Production Forest Land and Permanent Timber Production Zone Land

Following the 2015 Reactive Monitoring Mission by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Heritage Committee recommended that Future Potential Production Forest (FPPF) land in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area be given reservation status.

I write to advise that the reserve declarations which were approved in the Tasmanian State Parliament on 27 October 2022 are unlikely, in Australia ICOMOS' opinion, to respect the World Heritage Committee Decision 44COM7B.75, especially in relation to Recommendations 11 and 20.

Recommendation 11: Future Potential Production Forest Land (FPPFL) within the property should not be convertible to Permanent Timber Production Zone Land (PTPZL) and should be granted status as national park.

Recommendation 20: State Party should support and consolidate the emerging joint management of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

The purposes of both the Regional Reserve and Conservation Area reserve classes include, under Schedule 1 of the Tasmanian *National Parks and Reserves Management Act 2002*, timber harvesting, mining and hunting game. These are activities which would continue to degrade the Outstanding Universal Value of these areas as part of the property, and in particular the Aboriginal cultural landscape values. We note that the management objectives of these reserve classes would appear to allow for co-operative management with Aboriginal people only when consistent with the purposes of reservation – that is Aboriginal people would have no opportunity to object to or prevent permitted activities such as logging, mining or hunting.

The poor condition of the 22,550 hectares of Future Potential Production Forest Land is cited by the Tasmanian Government as the primary reason for reclassification as 'Regional Reserves' and 'Conservation Areas'. Rehabilitation, however, is a management objective for all reserve classes, and is part of the Guiding Vision for management of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area under its Management Plan. There would appear to be no reason that these FPPFLs could not be proclaimed as National Park with an objective being to rehabilitate the areas degraded by previous logging.

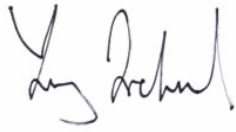
As you would be aware, the World Heritage Committee (WHC) has been unable to meet this year and consequently, as we understand, it has not yet been able to respond to the Australian Government's advice on the Tasmanian Government's proposed reserve categories.

Given the inadequate level of protection for Outstanding Universal Value offered by the Tasmanian Government's reserve proclamations and the failure to fulfill the World Heritage Committee's Recommendations 11 and 20, we urge the Australian Government:

- to seek a delay in any further action until there is a response from the World Heritage Committee to the draft reserve proposals;
- to reject the Tasmanian Government's recent proclamations; and

- to seek a more appropriate reserve status, such as National Park or State Reserve.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Ireland'.

**Professor Tracy Ireland M. ICOMOS FSA
President**

Copies: The Honourable Roger Jaensch, Minister for Parks, Tasmania
 The Honourable Madeleine Ogilvy, Minister for Heritage, Tasmania