

1998-99

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENTS BILL 1998

SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Amendment to be moved on behalf of the Government

(Circulated by the authority of the
Minister for Forestry and Conservation,
the Hon Wilson Tuckey MP)

REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENTS BILL 1998

GENERAL OUTLINE

The Regional Forest Agreements Bill 1998 (the Bill) will provide legislative support to the outcomes of Regional Forest Agreements entered into between the Commonwealth and respective States and Territories.

The Government proposes an amendment to the Bill, providing for the establishment of a Forest Products Advisory Council (FPAC), with its functions to be determined by the Minister.

This amendment will ensure all stakeholders of the Government's commitment to establishing such a Council, while leaving scope for the actual functions to be "fleshed out" by the Minister in agreement with industry.

The Minister's determination of the Council's functions will be a disallowable instrument for the purposes of section 46A of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1901*.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

There will be no direct financial impacts from the passage of the Government's proposed amendment to the Bill. However, it is likely that the establishment and on-going operation of FPAC will require Government funding in the future. If so, the required funding will be sourced from existing portfolio funds or an additional appropriation will be sought.

NOTES ON INDIVIDUAL CLAUSES

Clause (1): Forest Products Advisory Council

Clause (1) provides for the establishment of a Council to be known as the Forest Products Advisory Council.

The Council is constituted as the Minister (Chairperson) and such other members as appointed by the Minister in writing, the majority of whom must be involved in the forest and wood products sector. The functions of the Council in relation to the forest and wood products sector are to provide advice to the Minister on the development and implementation of the Action Agenda for the Forests and Wood Products Sector and other functions to be determined by the Minister.

This clause also provides that the Council must meet at least twice in each calendar year, and that the Council may determine its own proceedings.