Australia: Tree plantations grabbing thriving forests

Today I went for a walk in the Tarkine. I was fortunate to sit under a wedge tailed eagle as it circled around me. Its nest must have been nearby as it seemed to linger, most curious about my intrusion. As I wandered in to that spot, so similar to many other places in Tassie's north-west, I had the pleasure of seeing a couple of wallabies and some rather rare trees, amongst which was a magnificent specimen of native olive.

This was made all the more unique because I was on the edge of plantation country. This area is being converted from native forest to weed infested Eucalyptus nitens plantations at such a rapid rate that a mere six weeks ago, much of the cleared, piled up debris that surrounded me was magnificent rainforest, filled with myrtle, moss, ferns and teeming with life. One coop I entered was not even logged for chips or sawlogs. It was purely a land grab, salvage crews had retrieved some of the trees for speciality timbers but most of the rainforest was burnt. Pure, unethical waste.

By the year 2020, the amount of plantations in Tasmania will be doubled if we do not do something now. Old growth, which we are lead to believe is well protected, is being cut down, burnt and woodchipped. Rainforests, with so many different varieties of fungi that it would be impossible to count them are dozed through and slashed. Again, pushed into windrows and burnt. Thousands of jobs have been cut since the Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) was signed.

Forestry Tasmania tell us their logging is world's best practice but everyday clearfelling and streamside logging occurs. Communities disappear, towns are removed from maps as family homes and farms are levelled and put under plantations. 1080 [a poison used by farmers and foresters to kill animals that may affect plantations] is then laid and native animals also disappear. Few survive if any.

This madness, so destructive, is not unstoppable. These forests are yours --they are on public land! Tell everyone you know, lobby politicians, forward this email on. Please help us make a difference.

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