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Australia drops Tasmanian Wilderness logging campaign

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Conservation groups have welcomed the decision

The Australian and Tasmanian authorities are abandoning their bid to have logging permitted in the Tasmanian Wilderness, a World Heritage site.

The decision comes after a report by the UN cultural agency Unesco said the area "should be off-limits to commercial logging in its entirety".

The **Tasmanian Wilderness** covers about a fifth of the island and is one of the world's last big temperate forests.

Conservation groups have welcomed the Unesco report and the logging decision.

In 2014 the Australian government asked the agency to revoke the special status of the forest to open up parts of it to logging in order to boost the island's economy, where unemployment is above the national average.

But the move - by the government of former PM Tony Abbott - attracted much opposition from environmental groups.

The Unesco report released on Saturday said the organisation "does not consider a World Heritage property recognised for its outstanding cultural and natural values the place to experiment with commercial logging of any kind".

The Tasmanian Wilderness is home to ancient forests, some of the tallest flowering plants in the world and is a stronghold for several animals that are either extinct or threatened on Australia's mainland.

Both the Australian federal and the Tasmanian state government have said they will abide by that recommendation.



The Tasmanian Devil is one of a number of important species living in the Wilderness

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