MEDIA RELEASE

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Tasmanian Government fails to act on protecting national parks and reserves from major developments

Minister Duigan announced yesterday that the government has abandoned the proposed amendments to Reserve Activity Assessments (RAA) that would have established a statutory assessment process for developments in National Parks and Reserves, including our World Heritage Areas.

Tasmania's reserved public lands are currently largely zoned to permit inappropriate developments, which removes the right to appeal developments. Minister Duigan's statement yesterday makes it clear that the government has abandoned new legislation and wants to further remove any protections and appeal rights through the ongoing review of the Statewide Planning Scheme via changes to the State Planning Provisions.

Minister Duigan falsely justified not progressing the proposed statutory assessment process because public submissions had opposed this change. This is not correct as the submissions overwhelmingly opposed the specific changes proposed by the government, to create Development Assessment Panels for reserved land which would have removed planning appeal rights. The Minister is making false claims about what our organisations and the general community has said in our submissions.

Our organisations do support legislation to make the RAA process a statutory process to address a range of existing problems we have been raising for over eight years.
What our organisations are calling for is a transparent statutory process for assessment of developments in National Parks and Reserves, that includes the right to merit-based planning appeal rights. Without reform, continuing with the existing RAA process will see developments like the Malbena disaster repeated over and over again - no genuine community consultation, secret leases signed before proposals receive statutory approval, developers preparing their own assessment reports.

Groups:

The Wilderness Society
Tasmanian National Parks Association
Planning Matters Alliance Tasmania
Tasmanian Conservation Trust
Fishers and Walkers Tasmania
Grassroots Action Network Tasmania
North East Bioregional Network