

Media release by the Save Your Leatherwood Honey Association Inc.

The executive of the Save Your Leatherwood Honey Association Inc has met to consider the forest reserve map published under the terms of the forest agreement.

The association as the lobby group for the Tasmanian beekeepers supports the implementation of the agreement and thereby the map, on the basis that it has the potential to preserve at least half of the leatherwood resource which is currently under threat from timber harvesting.

The implementation of the reserves as published in the map will go a long way towards ensuring the continuation of a viable beekeeping industry in the south of Tasmania and gives added security to the industry state wide.

Representations are now being made to the assessment panel headed by Prof. Jonathan West, to take this matter into account when making a decision as to the conservation value of forest which qualifies to be placed in reservations under the forest agreement.

For too long the beekeeping industry on which at least **60%** of our Tasmanian grown food supply depends, has been sidelined in favour of timber harvesting.

As previously reported an agreement has been reached in the wedge block of the Derwent district for the preservation of mature leatherwood stands. this was an important step in the right direction but nevertheless a small step. However only an area of 10000ha out of more than 500000ha of state forest in the south, was affected by the agreement.

Negotiations aimed at preserving the resource in other leatherwood/beekeeping areas, have been taking place with forestry Tasmania over the past 18 months, with mixed result and certainly without giving any certainty or permanence.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to put the industry on a more permanent and sustainable footing.