Daniel Andrews' sham forestry plan felled

The Victorian Labor Government has finally admitted that its promise to transition the state's native regrowth timber industry to solely plantation-based timber by 2030 is a sham.

The Age today revealed that Victoria's Agriculture Minister Mary-Anne Thomas has conceded that the promised plantations won't be ready by 2030.

Victorian Agriculture Minister Mary-Anne Thomas said the Government had been clear that plantation trees planted now will not be ready by 2030 and that they will not be replacing native forests tree-for-tree.

The Age newspaper, 25 March, 2021

The astonishing admission comes after 18 months of Premier Daniel Andrews, and his Ministers, repeatedly promising that there will be minimal job losses when the Government ends native forest harvesting in 2030 because it will transition sawmills to plantation logs.

"Everything the Andrews Government has promised the thousands of regional workers, their families and their communities to this point has today been exposed as a lie," Australian Forest Products Association Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton said today. "Everyone in regional Victoria has known that the plan was a sham from the start and now it's been exposed."

"Anyone who knows anything about tree growth rates, has known from the start that – even if hardwood plantation trees could fill all the timber needs of Victoria - they would take many decades to grow and tens of thousands of hectares of agricultural land which the Government hasn't even purchased yet."

Mr Hampton commended Federal Nationals Member for Gippsland Darren Chester and the CFMEU's Michael O'Connor for relentlessly pursuing an answer from the Government which drew out this admission.

"It is time the Victorian Labor Government came clean with the workers in the industry and the dozens of regional communities across Victoria that the timber industry underpins and admitted that there will be mass unemployment unless this decision is reversed."