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LNP Timber Plan Excludes Conservationists, Sparks Debate

July 31, 2025

— Categories: Politics & Government



The Liberal National Party (LNP) government in Queensland is under scrutiny following its decision to exclude conservation organisations from a ministerial roundtable guiding its upcoming timber industry plan. The move has raised concerns about transparency and the balance of environmental and economic priorities in forest policy.

Elected in October 2024, the LNP committed to delivering a Queensland Timber Industry Plan within its first year in office. The plan aims to secure long-term timber supply and support the state's housing and construction sectors. However, the current structure of the

roundtable—comprised primarily of industry stakeholders—has sparked criticism from environmental advocates, who argue they are being shut out of critical policy discussions.

Queensland manages over 2.9 million hectares of publicly owned native forests, forming the largest state forest estate in Australia. These forests serve both commercial and conservation functions. Environmental groups, including the Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) and the Wilderness Society, have expressed concern that excluding non-industry stakeholders undermines the credibility and sustainability of the planning process.

The QCC has previously highlighted risks to biodiversity, citing species such as the greater glider, which has suffered from habitat loss linked to logging. Environmental advocates continue to push for a greater shift toward plantation-based forestry, which already provides the majority of Queensland's timber products.

Timber Queensland and other industry bodies currently represented on the roundtable support measures to enhance timber production for the state's \$107 billion construction sector. However, critics caution that prioritising short-term economic interests without inclusive consultation could risk repeating historical missteps in forest management.

While the LNP maintains that its timber strategy will support job growth and regional development, environmental groups have warned that a lack of diverse representation in decision-making processes may lead to outcomes that harm long-term ecological and economic sustainability. As the government moves ahead with its timber plan, it faces growing calls to broaden stakeholder engagement and ensure all voices are considered in shaping Queensland's forest future.