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## Independent scientists call on the Government to properly regulate the impact of industry on threatened species.

On threatened species day (Thursday, 7 September) a number of Recovery Plans and Conservation Advices were released by the Federal Government for some of the nation's most at risk species. For Tasmania, this included a recovery plan for the Swift Parrot and a conservation advice for the Maugean skate, both endangered.

Both documents have indicated that industry is the major threat to both species. For the Swift Parrot, the Recovery Plan states that native forest logging is 'a significant threat to the continued persistence of the species', while the Conservation Advice for the Maugean Skate highlights salmon farms as the predominant threat.

However, the management recommendations for both species differ substantially. Advice for the skate recommends, "significantly reducing fish biomass" in Macquarie Harbour, which properly addresses the main threat. But the Recovery Plan for the Swift Parrot does not require any changes to existing forestry practices, despite scientists identifying native forest logging as the key threat to the species for many years.

**Dr Jennifer Sanger**, a member of the Tasmanian Independent Science Council and co-founder of The Tree Projects, is extremely disappointed with the Recovery Plan.

"This Recovery Plan is our last chance to properly protect the Swift Parrot, and it completely ignores native forest logging as a threat. This recovery plan is a death warrant for this species."

While the Recovery Plan for the Swift Parrot calls for the protection of critical habitat as a management action, it excludes any areas under Regional Forest Agreements, which are areas managed for native forest logging. Regional Forest Agreements are also excluded from National environmental laws.

"The Regional Forest Agreements are insufficient for managing threatened species, and the Federal Government has even acknowledged this. But once again, we see a carve out of the forestry industry from having to abide by the rules. It's just unacceptable in the midst of Australia's extinction crisis," said Dr Sanger.

**Dr Ed Butler** from the Tasmanian Independent Science Council was pleased to see that the impact of salmon farming on the skate was being addressed in the Conservation Advice and urged the Tasmanian Government to not extend fish farm licenses in Macquarie Harbour after their expiry on 30 November 2023.

"We need to see Macquarie Harbour destocked of finfish farms. Perhaps to demonstrate their commitment to Tasmanian jobs, the foreign-owned salmon producers could instead implement land-based, closed-loop recirculating aquaculture systems on the West Coast" Dr Butler suggested.

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