Jones, Carol

From: The Premier
Sent: Thursday, 9 July 2026 2:27 PM
To: dlo@pm.gov.au
Subject: Letter from the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff MP to the Hon Anthony Albanese PM
Attachments: PREMIER OUTGOING - the Hon Anthony Albanese PM - Sale of Rushy Lagoon.pdf

Dear Prime Minister

Please find attached a letter from the Premier, Jeremy Rockliff MP.

Departmental Liaison Officer
Office of the Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP

Tasmanian Government

Premier of Tasmania
Liberal Member for Braddon
Level 11, 15 Murray Street, Hobart 7000
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TASMANIA

PREMIER OF TASMANIA

9 July 2026

Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
By Email: dlo@pm.gov.au

Dear Prime Minister

I write following the decision to grant Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB) approval for the sale of Rushy Lagoon in North East Tasmania. I also write further to correspondence from the Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water to the Treasurer in March 2026 regarding this matter.

Rushy Lagoon is one of Tasmania's most significant agricultural enterprises, supporting dairy, beef and cropping activities and contributing materially to regional employment, local supply chains and Tasmania's broader agricultural economy. Its scale, productivity and strategic importance make it a matter of considerable public interest.

The Tasmanian Government shares the view that decisions relating to assets of this significance must be carefully considered, particularly given our ambition to sustainably grow the value of Tasmania's agricultural sector, strengthen food production and support regional communities.

There remains widespread concern regarding the apparent absence of meaningful engagement with key stakeholders at the community and industry level. TasFarmers has advised that, to its knowledge, there was no formal consultation with regional communities, industry representative bodies or local government as part of this process.

This lack of consultation has undermined confidence in both the assessment process and the ultimate decision. For an asset of this significance, there is a reasonable expectation that affected stakeholders and communities would be afforded an opportunity to have their views considered.

A central concern raised by TasFarmers and reinforced by industry stakeholders is that this transaction demonstrates the market distortion that has resulted from Commonwealth-backed financing mechanisms, particularly through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC), combined with carbon market incentives.

Stakeholders contend that government-supported finance and carbon-related revenue opportunities have directly influenced the transaction by enabling a purchase price that local agricultural operators could not reasonably compete with based on agricultural production alone.

As a result, a highly productive farming enterprise has been acquired at a value that many in the agricultural sector believe was detached from its underlying productive capacity and instead influenced by policy settings that favour alternative land-use outcomes.

This has created a significant imbalance in the agricultural land market. Local farmers and agricultural investors were not competing against another agricultural enterprise operating under the same commercial parameters; rather, they were competing against a purchaser whose business case was enhanced by government-supported finance and carbon market opportunities.

The concern is not simply that market distortion may occur in the future, but that it has already occurred in this case.

The implications extend beyond a single transaction. Stakeholders are concerned that existing Commonwealth policy settings are driving highly productive agricultural land beyond the reach of agricultural producers, reducing opportunities for farm expansion and succession, inflating land values beyond production-based returns, and encouraging the transfer of productive farmland into alternative land uses.

There is also widespread concern regarding the potential conversion of substantial areas of Rushy Lagoon from agricultural production to forestry or carbon sequestration activities.

Such a change would have consequences extending well beyond the property boundary. Local stakeholders have highlighted the potential loss of agricultural infrastructure, reduced economic activity across agricultural supply chains, diminished demand for agricultural services, and broader impacts on employment and regional economic resilience.

The Tasmanian Government supports farm forestry and recognises the right of landholders to determine how their land is managed. However, where an enterprise of this scale and significance is involved, any substantial shift away from food production warrants careful scrutiny and transparent consideration of the broader public interest.

In light of the concerns outlined above, it is critical that national interest considerations fully account for the demonstrable impacts this decision has had on agricultural land markets, agricultural productivity, regional economies and community confidence.

Rushy Lagoon has become a significant test case for whether current Commonwealth policy settings are inadvertently privileging carbon and environmental investment outcomes over ongoing agricultural production and long-term food security objectives.

I acknowledge that foreign investment proposals are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the national interest and that foreign investment continues to play an important role in Australia's economy. However, public confidence depends on those decisions being transparent, equitable and demonstrably in the national interest.

Given the significance of this asset, the concerns regarding the assessment process, and the evidence that government-supported financing and carbon market settings have distorted the competitive market for this highly productive agricultural enterprise, I respectfully request that you intervene in this matter and initiate a reassessment of both the decision and the policy settings that enabled it.

The Tasmanian Government remains committed to working constructively with the Commonwealth to ensure that investment settings support regional development, agricultural productivity and Australia's long-term food security while maintaining public confidence in the integrity of our markets.

Yours sincerely

Bridget Archer

Hon Bridget Archer MP
Acting Premier

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