



# Victorian Environmental Assessment Council

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## Media Release

### COMMUNITY ASKED TO HAVE THEIR SAY ON ANGAHOOK-OTWAY

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) has called on the Otway region community and other interested parties to 'have their say' on its Angahook-Otway Investigation into the establishment of a new National Park.

VEAC has today released its Angahook-Otway Investigation Discussion Paper, which covers current public land uses, impacts of a new national park on current land use and also proposed approaches in the establishment of a new National Park.

The release of the discussion paper is part of the investigation process requested by the Minister for the Environment to provide proposals on the establishment of a new National Park and future use of public land in the Otway region.

VEAC Chairman Dr Brian Robinson said the Discussion Paper was the first of a three-part investigation process.

"VEAC is undertaking strategic public land use planning for the region and the community's insight and experiences of how they use the land – whether it's for recreation, tourism, business or industry, is vital to ensure that VEAC is able to consider all view points for sustainable land use in formulating its recommendations," Dr Robinson said.

"At this stage we're looking for submissions from the community and interested parties. This is the time for them to have their say – before any proposals are put forward on changing the existing public land use in the Otways."

The Angahook-Otway Investigation includes some 337,500 hectares from Anglesea to Princetown and from the coast to Colac. VEAC's investigation is limited to public land (158,975 hectares).

Dr Robinson said community members would have a chance to gain further insight into the issues raised in the Discussion Paper in person with VEAC Councillors and representatives during October and November.

"We're holding community forums in Anglesea, Apollo Bay, Colac, Lavers Hill, Lorne and Geelong in October to inform the community about land uses in the Otways to enable them to make informed submissions.

"But people should note that submissions do need to be made directly to VEAC, either by letter, fax or email, for them to be considered," Dr Robinson added.

Submissions made to VEAC will be considered in detail for the preparation of a Draft Proposals Paper (due in April 2004), at which time there will be the opportunity for further community consultation. VEAC will present its final report to the Minister in September 2004 for subsequent consideration and decision by the Government.

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### **Notes to Editors:**

- Confirmed information session dates will be advertised in local press and on the VEAC website.
- Copies of the report can be purchased for \$10.00 from local Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) offices in Colac, Forrest, Gellibrand, Geelong and Melbourne; and from Information Victoria. The report can also be downloaded for free from [www.veac.vic.gov.au](http://www.veac.vic.gov.au) and a free summary brochure is also available.

### **For further information or to arrange an interview please contact:**

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