

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR SUMMER SOLSTICE 21ST JUNE**

**Save Ireland's Forests Campaign Ends as Government Bow to People Power.**

Now that the government have finally announced that the Public forests will not now be sold, our Public Forests are safe for the time being, this climbdown is a victory for the People. The Woodland League are both proud and honoured to have been the guardians of this Peoples campaign, and we are delighted to have won this hard fought battle after four long years.

We must however remain vigilant as Privatisation of State assets is still on the agenda going into the future, Minister Coveney has explicitly stated that this is the case with the forests after Coillte have been restructured. What this means is that the sale has been deferred or put on hold.

Let us push now for the long overdue reform of failed forestry policy, the regeneration of our native forests and unique woodland culture, staying united to demand a genuine sustainable forestry policy. We must oppose the creation of a Super Semi State company with a monopoly on so called renewable energy. Bioenergy Ireland will be able to avail of renewable energy grants, afforestation grants, and other subsidies to distort the markets for wood and energy. This public money will be used to fatten them up for speculators in the future for no benefits to the local community's whose environment will be sacrificed.

We need a community based model focused on our native tree species as advocated by the Woodland League and envisioned in our Alternative Vision for Forestry in Ireland on the website, not the marriage of two dinosaur semi states which will bury the mess which has been made of our Public forest resource.

Together we can create a new Treeconomy to help Treestore and Treejuvenate this broken land.

Andrew St Ledger, the Woodland League spokesperson said " A heartfelt thank you to everybody who contributed however small or large to achieving this collective result, this is your Victory make no mistake about it. The politicians felt the heat and were forced to back down, when too many citizens stand up at the same time, their narrow minded schemes are exposed and fall apart ".

Finally a big thank you to Richard Boyd Barrett who used his Public office, to highlight the campaign, for the benefit of the People a rarity among our elected representatives.