



South East Region Conservation Alliance Inc.

PO Box 797 Bega NSW 2550 AUSTRALIA
www.serca-online.org

25 March 2010

Premier
Minister for Redfern Waterloo
Ministerial Office
19 March 2010

Dear Premier

Last December we sought a meeting with you and asked you to intervene to stop Forests NSW from logging koala habitat in the coastal forests of the South East of NSW.

We again seek a meeting with you to try to resolve this question.

Your intervention is urgent because Forests NSW has now approved the harvest plans for the first two Mumbulla State Forest compartments on its schedule, and intends to start logging immediately.

We also wish to discuss with you the proposal from South East Fibre Exports to generate electricity at its Eden export woodchip mill, primarily from native forest inputs.

It is now clear that there is serious division between Ministers and Departments on the question of logging koala habitat. The only known breeding colony in the South East Forests, in Mumbulla State Forest, contains at best 30 to 50 koalas. Their range is about 50 kilometers. If they are to be rescued from regional extinction they need not just their immediate habitat but space to recolonise in the forests from Gulaga to Mumbulla where they were once numerous and there are still some scant indications of koala presence. Logging is also scheduled for Bermagui, Murrah and Tanja State Forests.

The dire situation of the koala has complex causes: hunting, disease, clearing for agriculture, fire, as well as logging. But it is logging for woodchips that could now push it over the edge to regional extinction.

The Harvest Plans for the Mumbulla compartments provide for over 92% of the timber to be woodchipped.

Australia does not need this wood – there is enough plantation resource to substitute for all the native forest woodchip production/exports.

Locally, the woodchipping industry does not need this wood. The industry is

still in the doldrums after the GFC - 4-day weeks, mill closures, loggers told to stockpile logs in the forest, the log stockpile in the mill expanded.

The sawmill industry is tiny and in long run decline as a result of over-logging of large trees over decades and structural changes in the construction industry.

Your Government has the power to cancel or alter the wood supply contracts.

Or it can bear the public shame of being the Government that pushed Australia's iconic koala to regional extinction in the South East Forests of NSW.

We hope you will opt for saving these regional koalas and support a scientifically based recovery plan for them.

Inevitably it will raise broader issues about the forestry industry in this region. We would like to discuss with you measures to resolve the socially damaging disputes about native forest logging in NSW more broadly.

Please contact me on 02-64945144.

Yours sincerely

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