

LETTER TO: mark.butlermp@aph.gov.au. THREATENED SPECIES DAY. HEATHER KENWAY. 22.08.2013

Dear Minister,

Election day is also threatened species day, as you would be aware.

Can you give a thought to the threatened species in regions available for industrialised native forest logging. I commend you to the report One Stop Chop: How Regional Forest Agreements Streamline Environmental Destruction - online at www.edovic/org.au/blog/RFA-Report.

Can you also consider how much damage current native forest logging operations are doing to attempts to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

- Could you indicate how your Government if returned, or in Opposition, proposes to deal with the adverse environmental impacts resulting from devolution of powers to the States in relation to the forestry industry, including damage to our best land-based carbon stores.
- Could you confirm your Government's position if returned or in Opposition on:
Not supporting change to the RECs rules;
Not giving up Commonwealth powers in one stop shop environmental assessment and approval processes.

Eden Monaro is a forestry electorate (and much else as well). We have first hand experience of disastrous devolution of Commonwealth powers to the States in the case of the Regional Forest Agreement areas, and how this has allowed the NSW Forestry Corporation to flout with impunity the environmental protections provided under relevant Commonwealth and State legislation. Our regional koala population (down now to maybe 60 animals, where there used to be tens of thousands), with Commonwealth and State listing as threatened, would have been completely wiped out by NSWFC if there had not been strong community protest compartment by compartment.

Habitat for many other animals and birds has been decimated, soils lost and degraded, water catchments and fish breeding grounds in coastal lakes damaged. Mixed age, mixed species forests have to a considerable extent been replaced by fire-prone simplified regrowth - altogether a huge loss of carbon, water and biodiversity values.

The O'Farrell Government is now proposing regulation change to allow native forest biomass to be used for electricity generation – a new industry that would create new drivers for even more intensive forest destruction – especially if at the Commonwealth level it is allowed to earn Renewable Energy Certificates.

At a recent Meet the Eden Monaro Candidates forum in Bermagui, Mike Kelly told us that the ALP would not support changing the regulations that currently prevent native forest biomass based electricity generation from earning Renewable Energy Certificates. He also said that the Commonwealth would not implement the one stop shop proposals that the Business Council of Australia and the States are pushing strongly.

However we understand that pressures on your Government from the forestry lobby in the first case and the BCA and States in the second may be putting those assurances in doubt.

We would appreciate your response.

Yours sincerely

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