

Letter to the Editor, BDN, Harriett Swift. 26 June 2020

Readers of the BDN could be forgiven for thinking that the woodchipping industry on the South Coast is no longer controversial. It is a very long time since anyone read a dissenting view, even after the recent spate of blank cheques from the taxpayer being waved around by visiting politicians, most recently the Prime Minister (BDN 23/6/20)

Astonishing exaggerations such as: "some 600 jobs in Eden depended on the mill" go unchallenged. To use the vernacular, this is b***s**t. Divide that figure by 20 and you are somewhere closer to the truth.

With 80% of the forest available for logging burnt in the summer fires, the community deserves a better response.

The bushfire catastrophe should be a catalyst for transition, not more and more massive public subsidies to entrench more and more destructive logging.

Logging of burnt forests is the most destructive logging of all. Professor David Lindenmayer's research shows serious negative environmental consequences for the next 200 years. The young regrowth forest will be more fire prone for the next 40 years.

Direct jobs in native forest logging are less than 1% of total workforce in Bega Valley and Eurobodalla Shires. It's *not* a big employer.

Until the virus pandemic, there were more jobs in the arts and entertainment in the Bega Valley Shire.

All jobs are important, especially right now, but with multi-million dollar subsidies per job, surely we can do better things with the money that is being thrown around.