



**LEADING AUSTRALIAN PRUE ACTON TO FRONT NEW
'BEAUTY OF THE FORESTS' CAMPAIGN**

A national and international 'Beauty' campaign that will highlight the endangered and unique forest networks of south east Australia has begun.

Former head of a multi-million dollar fashion label and prominent Australian, Prue Acton is behind the campaign, which in its first stage will involve a touring exhibition of work from celebrated Australian photographers and include images of coastal forests along the far south coast of NSW and Victoria's East Gippsland.

Ms Acton says the Beauty campaign will initially draw attention to this year's logging and wood-chipping schedule for the South East Forests. She says coastal forests between Bega and Bermagui, which are home to an extremely vulnerable remnant koala population, are included for logging in the schedule. "This is the last-known koala population on the south coast of NSW, it is likely that no more than 50 koalas survive where once there were tens of thousands."

"Photographer Richard Green has already taken a glorious panoramic image of the forests south from Gulaga (Mt Dromedary) near Bermagui, to Mumbulla Mountain, near Bega and this image is now featured on posters and cards available around the region. Other photographers have been commissioned and will also contribute to the Beauty exhibition."

"We intend to show Richard Green's image and the exhibition overseas to explain that many of south east Australia's beautiful forests continue to be destroyed and turned into woodchips at Nippon Paper's Eden Wood-Chip Mill. It is an international embarrassment to both Australia and Japan and an environmental tragedy. "

"Nationally I hope the exhibition will be a moving and emotional display of what will be lost unless the public make their voices heard. Protecting the River Red Gums in NSW was a great achievement last year and we now want the public to consider and voice their opposition to the destruction that's occurring along this beautiful and unique coastline."

Ms Acton who acts as a spokesperson for conservation lobby group – the South East Region Conservation Alliance - says in the 1980s the Franklin River in Tasmania was saved in part through beautiful images that captured the imagination of Australians. "We're looking to rival the success of that campaign."

Image: Forest Connections multi-stitched images coastal forests panorama from Bega River mouth, Mumbulla Mountain and Gulaga Mountains by Richard Green for United Nations International Year of the Forests 2011. www.serca.org.au/forestconnections

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