



South East Region Conservation Alliance Inc

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MEDIA RELEASE. INDEPENDENT REPORT BACKS SERCA'S CALL TO END SUBSIDIES TO NATIVE FOREST LOGGING. SERCA. 21 MARCH 2016.

The South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA) is calling on the Baird government to end massive public subsidies that are propping up the environmentally damaging native forest logging industry on the far south coast

A report by the independent policy think tank "The Australia Institute" has revealed that taxpayers effectively paid \$78 million in subsidies to keep the ailing sector afloat. ¹

"The far south coast is home to Australia's oldest and most destructive woodchip mill at Eden but would not have survived without massive taxpayer subsidies," SERCA Deputy Convenor, Harriett Swift said.

"Native forest woodchipping has been devastating for wildlife in this region and is driving many local forest species to extinction," Ms Swift said.

"It is totally unacceptable that our taxes are used to degrade this irreplaceable natural heritage. Once these species are gone, it is virtually impossible to bring them back.

"SERCA is calling on the Baird government to scrap the subsidies and develop a plan end native forest logging entirely by the time the Regional Forest Agreements expire in 2019.

"Native forest logging is a 19th century industry that has no place in the modern world. We need the government to develop a strategy to maximise the incredible economic and environmental potential of managing our great forests as carbon storage and for tourism.

"These are modern industries which are ecologically and economically sustainable, and will provide employment for many more local people in the long-term."

The Australia Institute report found that:

- Taxpayers have subsidised NSW native forest logging by \$78 million since 2009.
- The government could make more money by ending logging of native forests and managing them as carbon stores and tourist assets.
- The market for native forest products has shrivelled over the past decade will continue to decline.
- The Forestry Corporation is exempt from paying rates, so ratepayers are subsidising native forest logging by paying to repair roads trashed by logging trucks.

"This report provides compelling evidence in support of ending native forest logging once and for all," Ms Swift said.

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¹ Money doesn't grow on trees: The financial and economic losses of native forestry in NSW
www.nature.org.au/media/213736/160320-money-doesnt-grow-on-trees-nsw-forestry-final.pdf