

From: Heather Kenway [mailto:nkenway@bigpond.net.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 16 June 2010 10:36 PM
To: Kelly, Mike (MP)
Cc: serca_members@googlegroups.com; Prue Acton
Subject: Request for meetings with you, Senator Wong and Minister Burke

Dr Mike Kelly, Member for Eden Monaro

Dear Mike

Thank you for your response (attached) to the SERCA submission on the proposal by South East Forest Exports to establish a biomass power plant at its Eden native forest woodchip mill.

SERCA has written to the NSW Premier, Ministers and Members of the NSW Parliament on issues raised in its submission.

SERCA very much appreciates your referral of issues to NSW Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, Frank Sartor. Unfortunately Minister Sartor sees the issue as one only for the Minister for Planning.

I have now had discussions on this proposal with officials of the NSW Planning Department of Planning. They are concerned about the issues raised by SERCA, but are somewhat constrained by the narrow scope of the environment assessment prepared as part of the assessment process. It would be a fair comment to say that NSW Government processes appear to be far more rigid than Commonwealth processes and less able to look at the broader economic and environmental aspects of this proposal.

Since the major financial driver of the proposal is the Commonwealth's Renewable Energy Target legislation, which ostensibly allows native forest woodchipping waste to be used to generate electricity and be deemed to be renewable energy and eligible to earn Renewable Energy Certificates that can be traded, SERCA considers that it is no longer possible for Commonwealth Ministers and Members like yourself to treat the issue as one only for the NSW Government. Attached are SERCA's points discussed with NSW officials and relevant to the Commonwealth's RET legislation. You may note that the National Association of Forest Industries is campaigning for wider access to native forests for electricity generation, to allow use not just of wastes but also of any wood from any forests logged under Commonwealth or State management regimes.

The issue has had a serious airing tonight on the ABC's 7.30 report. The recent Galaxy poll suggests that the public concerns with native forest logging are as strong as ever. The chipmill manager's defence tonight of the SEFE proposal and comment that woodchips could be exported for European electricity generation can hardly be expected to go down well with the Australian public.

SERCA would very much like to discuss with you the Commonwealth's position on this question, and talk to Ministers Wong and Burke about the financial crisis

in the Australian forestry industry and new policy directions that could get forest policies much closer in line with climate change policy imperatives.

There will be SERCA representatives in Canberra next week for other meetings. Would you be able to meet them for discussions and facilitate meetings with Ministers Wong and Burke? SERCA would very much appreciate your assistance in this regard. I will call your office to discuss possible timings.

Yours sincerely
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Attached: Your letter to me of 10 June 2010;
SERCA's points on the SEFE proposal raised with the NSW Department
of Planning and relevant to RET legislation