

# Prue Acton

The General Manager  
Attention: MB Fowler  
Bega Valley Shire Council  
PO Box 492  
Bega NSW 2550  
Or email to: [council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@begavalley.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr. Fowler  
Wood Pellet Factory

I strongly object to Bega Valley Shire Council DA2011.35 Lot 16 DP 1066187 lodged by Nippon Paper owned company, SEFE which operates the chip mill at Eden.

Because of the change in traditional markets away from native forests to plantations for fibre, and timber, Nippon Paper is looking for new ways of utilizing their access to native forest pulp logs supplied by state governments under cost and private owners at \$2.00 a tonne.

Taxpayers, through Council rates and State taxes, pick up the tab for use of this 'free' resource with our unique environment the loser.

More importantly however, is the changing character of our forests from wet to dry because of almost clear felling practices, and ever more frequent logging which leads to single-aged, single-species forests; these are much more fire-prone than natural forests.

Logged forests suck up water supplies and cannot support the diversity of species needed for resilient forests against an ever-changing climate.

Bio-fuels from native forests have been proven to contribute several times more GHGs than fossil fuels.

Council should, instead of approving this pellet factory, be promoting the new low carbon economy: Tourism, Retirees, eco-friendly products and services, renewable energy, Creative and Arts based industries, regional food production and products, and new sources of fibre for paper. And electricity

## **Resource for manufacture of wood pellets**

Forty years ago, when the chip mill was approved, the quantities envisioned were small; now over 90% of State Forest supplied logs are woodchipped, supposedly as waste from the collection of native forest saw logs. NSW Forests has admitted their saw log supply will run out in a couple of years.

The question is where will the chip mill source their materials? Recently we have seen an increase in log trucks, with larger and larger trees than the so-called "thinnings" deemed necessary for saw log production. See The Weekend Australian 12-13 February, Inquirer Page 3 for independent observations from their Environment Editor, Graham Lloyd.

Many of these trees are now coming from private forests and **sold at \$2.00 per tonne** with no provision for clearing up wood slash, which would make it uneconomic.

The trees now being logged in private and public forests are different species, which in the past were too red or dark for the Japanese woodchip market. The new Chinese markets are purchasing these lower-grade chips.

## **Unique wildlife on the Australian Coastal Wilderness**

Koalas, which are endangered of regional extinction, along with hundreds of other threatened and endangered species, live and feed from a wide variety of species. With only a third of our precious forests is protected in National Parks, which are mainly located on very poor soils, which cannot provide the nutrients that koalas need for a healthy diet. Koalas need big trees and as territorial animals travel up to 50 km to find new breeding grounds. Forests outside National Parks are essential to their survival.

Koalas are the must see item for Japanese tourists.

### **Jobs**

Tasmanian logging crews (often ignorant of local regulations) are now working in the South East Region. Jobs were the excuse that the then forest Minister, Ian Macdonald gave State Parliament a few years ago, for supplying pulp logs below cost to Nippon Paper's chip mill; yet Australia has to bring in truck drivers from overseas.

Each Eden chip mill job is subsidized by the State Government of NSW to the tune of \$6-70,000.00 per annum.

How much better would the town of Eden be using this \$4-5 million per annum to improve local and tourism amenities. Victorian taxpayers are contributing even more to Nippon's bottom line.

Siltation of water ways, down stream industries such as oyster farming and fish nurseries essential for fish supplies deserve protection from the virtual clear-felling of forests for nine out of ten trees to be chipped.

A Sky Walk through our beautiful forests would add immensely to the local economy and provide jobs, complimenting whale watching, etc.

Our coastal forests are the best in NSW; our Coast Wilderness temperate forests are identified as the most accessible in the world.

### **Increasing our carbon debt**

Currently wood, which is too fine for making paper, is sold as garden mulch thus building soil carbon or is used by Bega Cheese to heat whey, a much more efficient use than producing electricity from wood pellets.

CO<sup>2</sup> from logging and burning off wood slash in native forests does not need to be counted in Australia's GHG emissions. Native forest logging to supply the Eden chip mill is responsible for about 2% of Australia's greenhouse gases.

### **Changing the character of our native forests**

"Forests are not renewable in any reasonable time frame" Ken Henry Secretary to the Treasury.

Australia's forests take around 200 hundred years to recover carbon, water and the essential hollows so necessary for the critical suite of animals, such as possums and gliders. ( see ABC1 Out of the Ashes interview with Dr. David Lindenmayer.)

In this ABC program David Lindenmayer says that a logged forest is more likely to burn than an unlogged forest and points out the inter-relationships between wildlife, fungi and forests' ability to regenerate.

<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/geo/documentaries/interactive/outoftheashes/>

### **Summary**

I therefore ask you to not recommend to Council approval of this new plant. With no moral or economic questions asked about the supply chain Council will be derelict in their duty to the long term safety from fire, water supplies and the undermining of the unique character of our wilderness coast forests.

Questions must be asked such as how much carbon is lost, how much habitat and therefore animals, how woodchipping is affecting water supplies and soil carbon, and the long term degradation of our carbon dense, and unique and beautiful forests.

These are serious scientific, economic and moral questions; residents already understand how woodchipping is affecting native forests so it is time to move to a new low carbon industrial future not based on mining natural non-renewable resources.

Yours sincerely

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