

August/September 1995

\$2.00

# Environs



THIS ISSUE: ●French Nuclear Tests ●Jobs V The Environment  
●\$100,000 up for grabs ●Pesticide Legislation

the north coast environment magazine



*Handwritten notes and stamps:*  
PH 9  
env  
P6  
P8 EDIT  
P9 env  
(P13)  
P17  
P18



# PEOPLE ONLY WANT THE SAME RIGHTS AS TOMATOES

## *The changing face of pesticide risk.*

Humans face many risks every day. Some, like those posed by car and air travel, smoking or bad diet, are well recognised. Individuals can minimise or avoid such risks, and can also take out insurance to cover themselves if an accident occurs. Pesticide risk is different. Like other forms of chemical risk, its impact is uncertain, and much exposure is involuntary. People have to breathe, eat and drink, and most have no choice about their exposure. The unborn and the very young certainly do not, and in most cases, neither do their parents. Although most vulnerable, the young and the unborn are least equipped to challenge those who profit from, and sanction, pesticide use.

People working with pesticides do so voluntarily, but many lack information about, or are sceptical of, the degree of risk. The majority of farmers and pest control operators believe that pesticides are essential for business and vigorously defend their 'user rights'. For employees using pesticides, there is rarely a choice about exposure. If they want to keep their jobs, they are obliged to accept risks. Many find it difficult, if not impossible, to obtain comprehensive Material Safety Data Sheets, and because of their social status, tend to accept their exposure as an unavoidable reality of life.

Companies using pesticides usually take out public liability insurance against accidental spillage, drift or misuse. However the complexities of the 'proof issue' make the generally limited coverage given difficult to claim against. In the majority of cases, people have less rights than laboratory test

animals, even less rights than tomatoes. In the latter case, because of past drift damage to commercial crops, regulations have been promulgated that make it illegal to spray certain pesticides within a specified distance of tomato crops.

If humans were afforded the same considerations, many chemically sensitive people would be better able to cope with their medical conditions and pose less of a cost to the health system.

There are many instances where people have been poisoned by the misuse of pesticides, but the influence of industry over pesticide regulators has, in the past, ensured that these incidents are quickly 'hosed down' and forgotten as soon as possible. Even when clear-cut cases of acute poisoning occur, the industry resists any suggestion of liability right from the outset. To do this they employ the services of doctors and lawyers who protect their corporate clients by arguing the case against the sickness itself.

### The Gauci Case

Narelle and Gary Gauci had their mobile home sprayed for spiders in November 1990. It was a routine treatment with the organophosphate chlorpyrifos and included

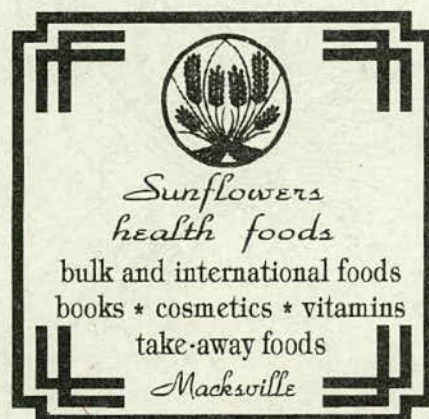
the spraying of the external walls and the shed. The air conditioner was also sprayed.

Five days later, both began to feel off-colour, and on the sixth day both became very ill with extreme chest tightness, fever, sweating, coughing, aching legs and back, and pallor. The next day Gary spent time in the shed with his friend Peter, who soon felt sick and went inside to lie down. The air conditioner was turned on. After an hour, Peter's condition had worsened and Narelle and Gary felt their chest tightness return. Another family friend who was visiting at the time also became ill.

The Gaucis rang the pest control company to find out what had been used but were just told that the pesticides could not harm humans. They then rang Poisons Information and after call to the company were told that chlorpyrifos had been used.

Then began the rounds of hospitals, doctors, government officials, company people and lawyers. Their first blood samples were lost, other samples mixed up, lost and later found. Twelve days later, a government official and company representative arrived together to take air samples and statements from the four people who were ill.

In later correspondence, the Gaucis were informed by company lawyers that the firm





was not liable. This advice was based on a medical opinion that stated that none of the four could have been poisoned with chlorpyrifos because their blood cholinesterase levels were not low enough. Instead, the doctor, a former senior health official in the NSW Government, said he suspected viral illness for the Gaucis. He explained the illness suffered by the two other people as 'currently inexplicable'. Attempts by the Gaucis to obtain publicity about their case were foiled when a major metropolitan newspaper backed off from reporting their story after being contacted by the pest control company's lawyers.

They never received any compensation.

**T**he Gauci case highlights the inadequacy of laws and regulations designed to protect people from pesticide exposure. It also demonstrates gross inadequacies in performance standards for pesticide application. However these standards, as well as those set to limit residues in food and water, are very much a moveable feast. In all OECD countries except Mexico, Spain and Australia, pesticide assessment is under scrutiny and re-assessment. This is because the original data used for their registration has been found to be false, misleading or inadequate. And although an Australian data review program is being developed by the National Registration Authority, the process is cumbersome, poorly conceived and undemocratic. At a recent community consultation meeting in Sydney, involving four senior public servants, only two community members attended. Despite this, the consultative process was subsequently reported as aiming to accord 'to the principles of openness, fairness, and consistency with regard to public consultation, selection for review and standards of assessment'.

Thus despite the rhetoric of 'transparency' and 'consultation' the pesticide re-review process is yet to be clearly defined and relevant standards for risk yet to be developed. Even more importantly, adequate mechanisms have yet to be established for public and peer review of both process and content. Meanwhile the 400-plus pesticides used in Australia remain registered on the basis of highly inadequate, sometimes dangerously incomplete, data bases.

This means that government regulators or pesticide manufacturers cannot, by today's standards, guarantee the safety of pesticides when used as directed. However, because pesticides are global products, the new knowledge of their risks are recognised in-house by pesticide corporations wherever they operate. This includes Australia, as well as more developed nations that have in place

a pesticide re-review program, albeit imperfect and subject of criticism by a variety of environmental organisations.

## Conclusion

In the face of the increasingly recognised complexities of pesticide risk, the insurance industry is clearly aware of the issue. However

because the legal and medical professions have yet to come to terms with the implications of the data gap issue, many people will continue to suffer harmful pesticide exposure with little chance of securing justice and treatment for their injuries.

*Source: Kate Short, Australian Toxic Network News - May 1995*

## NSW LAND CLEARING CONTROLS

**O**n August 8, 1995, the Minister for Land and Water Conservation, Mr Kim Yeadon, announced that the State Government was to "bring in controls on land clearing to protect native vegetation in the environmental, social and economic interests of the State." This will not be a blanket ban on land clearing; land management practices would be subject to transparent assessment procedures for land clearing applications. The controls will include an exemption system which will allow the clearing of areas less than two hectares per year without permission. Mr Yeadon said "This policy will not prevent farmers from undertaking necessary farming activities but will protect our valuable native vegetation."

Reaction to the land clearing reforms has varied from the predictable "Farmer's Rights" furphies of National Party MPs to qualified approval from environment groups. Terry Parkhouse from the North Coast Environment Council welcomed the vegetation controls, as "recent reports indicated there was a very serious problem in the over clearing of native vegetation. In the Yass area, on the Liverpool plains, in central Victoria in the Murray basin, in Western Australia, rising water tables due to the removal of native vegetation are causing severe salting problems. Not only will those rich farming areas go out of production but salted streams will carry the problems over a greater area."

Mr Parkhouse expressed concern that the two hectare exemption in the controls could be used as a loophole which could see "more important remnants of vegetation on the North Coast cleared completely in two or three years by doing two hectares a year." On the North Coast the threat to native vegetation comes not only from agriculture, "but other land holders and developers....Local Government, in their rush for development, are just as much at fault in not ensuring that proper planning has priority and not just the wishes of large land speculators".

The land clearing controls are about the rights of the whole community. "There is no God given right for a landholder to what they wish on their land. Whatever they do will impact in some way or other on other members of the community. It may be silting of a stream, excessive runoff on to a neighbours property, the rising of the salt level, the loss of water retention abilities or the loss of wildlife", he concluded.

[Further reading: Biodiversity Papers 6 & 7 (Native Vegetation Clearance & Land Disturbance) from the CSIRO, "Vegetation Protection- No Regrets" from the World Wildlife Fund and "Australian Native Vegetation- Need For Retention" by J. Heyden.]

*Source: Kim Yeadon Media Release 8/8/95, NCEC News Release, 10/8/95.*

**THE YELLOW SHED**  
Bellingen Craftworks & Garden Centre

OPEN 7 DAYS



It's fantastic!  
Discover the finest range of crafts  
and paintings on the North Coast.  
Explore our evergrowing garden centre!  
2 Hyde St. Bellingen. Ph 551 189

**Carty & Co**  
Solicitors



Suite 12,  
Old Bellingen Chambers 1A Oak Street  
Bellingen NSW 2454  
PO Box 356

John Carty B.Ec., LL.B  
Vivien Carty B.A., LL.B  
Tel: 066 551 377  
Fax: 066 552 633



# THE GOOD NEWS PAGE

*Victories, Promising Developments and the last laugh*

## Organic Farmers - The Fathers Of The Future

The drop in sperm density in industrial countries has been noted in previous issues of the ATNN. A recent Danish study confirmed the supposition that the problem stems from pesticide residues in our food.

30 Danish organic farm workers were matched with a group of industrial workers, and the study found that the sperm density for an average organic farm worker was 127 million/ml, compared with 55 million/ml, in the control sample.

Source: *Lancet* 343, 1498, 1994, extracted from *Hazardous Substance Review*, Vol 5, No 2, March 1995

## New Eco-Friendly Anchors Prevent Reef Damage

An innovative, environmentally friendly mooring system may be the salvation for coral damage by increasing numbers of boats weighing anchor and dragging their chains on popular Great Barrier Reef sites. Townsville based marine engineering company, Pacific Marine Group, is creating these mooring sites by drilling the anchors permanently into sand away from protected corals.

The mooring system can be configured to be used by small private vessels or large, permanently moored tourist pontoons. Engineers from the James Cook University, funded by the CRC Reef Research Centre are currently undertaking stress tests on the system at a site in Townsville to simulate sea bed conditions.

The installation and use of these anchors will help prevent damage to favoured sites on the GBR by providing an alternative to boats weighing anchors directly over coral. With enormous holding power and little need for mooring chains to drag, swing room is reduced giving further protection to surrounding corals. The system can be applied in any part of the world with coral reefs to protect. For further information, contact Don Alcock or Siriol Giffney on (077) 815 247 or Barrie Greensill on (077) 815081.

Source: *WAVES*, Vol 2 No 2 July 1995

## Acid Sulphate Soils In Court

The Land and Environment Court in Sydney ordered the urgent hearing of proceedings instituted by Fishwatch Inc. (a non-profit group aiming to look after the interests of recreational fishers) against a cane farming group at Tuckean near Lismore. Among other things, Fishwatch sought an injunction to restrain the release of acid-polluted waters from recently dug drains into the Richmond River and its tributaries. Also named as respondents were the Lismore City

council (as the local government authority). What's more, Fishwatch obtained approval from the court to bring action against the two NSW ministers: The Minister for Lands and the Minister for Planning and Environment.

Source: *Fishing World Magazine*, April 1995

## Solar Cats: The latest domestic thermal device

### Requirements:

north facing windows  
six black cats per adult in household  
(3 to 4 per child)

### Costs:

25kg of kitty litter per month  
20kg chicken livers

### Installation and use

On sunny days in the cooler months of the year, place black cats on the north facing window ledges of your house. Allow them to absorb the sun's rays for at least 3 hours. At the end of the day place all six cats around you in bed. Save the longest cat to wrap around your head, as 30% of body heat is lost through an individual's head.

On very cold winter days more cats may be required. Unfortunately, the system cannot be reversed in the summer months using white cats.

Source: *Soft Technology*, No 50

*Bumper Stickers we'd like to see*


*Hibiscus*  
**HEALTH  
MARKET**



**(065) 68-7826**  
SHOP 7 NAMBUCCA PLAZA  
PACIFIC HIGHWAY  
NAMBUCCA HEADS 2448

**The Forest Prevention Society**

**Clearfelling the  
Future, Today**





# The New Tooloom and Toonumbar National Parks

As part of their forest reforms package, the NSW government has announced the creation of two new national parks in the very north of NSW, Toonumbar NP and Tooloom NP. The boundaries at this stage are only foundation boundaries and won't be finalised until September at the earliest when parliament sits next. The new parks are only two parts of six previously proposed in the region. The other areas yet to be announced as National Park are the Cambridge Plateau on the Richmond Range, an extension of the Murrumbidgee Flora Reserve, Yabba and a western extension of the Border Ranges National Park encompassing Mt. Clunie and Wilsons Peak.

There is an urgent need to protect the missing parts of the two new National Parks and the other four areas from logging while assessments are being carried out and until the final park boundaries are set.

The Toonumbar Environment Centre (TEC) has proposed to the state government a whole Richmond Range National Park which includes all of the promised National Park areas as the core areas of ecological significance around which a vital network of corridors of high conservation value forests exists. The area contains NSW's largest continuous stands of rainforest outside of reserves, together with a number of highly significant old growth forest areas.

TEC's proposed Richmond Range National Park is part of the internationally significant Border Ranges, the evolutionary hub of the wet sub-tropics and is the overlap of the Northern and Southern biotas. The area is the western as well as northern and southern limit of many different species of fauna and flora. It is situated on the cross over between tropical and temperate climatic zones and is consequently one of the most biologically diverse areas in Australia. The area contains a variety of elevations, soil types and a transition from coastal to inland climates providing optimum habitat for a diverse range of flora and fauna species. In addition to this biodiversity, the area contains

high densities of some forest dependent endangered species in specific sites. The faunal qualities of the Dome Mountain area alone mark it out as one of the most important single sites on the north coast.

TEC's proposal recommends an Interim Resource Management Plan for certain areas of regrowth that need thinning to return the forest to a more diverse and natural forest type. This would provide short term timber resource and help the integration period until plantation timber becomes available in the long term.



*"State Forests maintained that once a compartment was dropped from Keating's list, on the grounds that no export woodchips would come from the compartment, there was no need to ensure that the timber was not used for woodchips."*

Unfortunately State Forests are still planning to log vital areas of old growth forest and high conservation value forest within TEC's proposed park area and within park areas promised by the State Government. The Cambridge Plateau is one such area with two compartments still on State Forests' "Order of Working". Both compartments are adjacent to the Cambridge Plateau Flora Reserve (a large stand of subtropical rainforest), and both contain large significant stands of oldgrowth forest and subtropical rainforest.

The compartments were identified by Senator Faulkner as being of high conservation value and were protected from logging by Keating, but they were dropped off "Keating's List" as there was no proof that export woodchips would come from the compartments. A neighbouring compartment, after being dropped from Keating's list, was logged and the timber sent to an export woodchip mill. State Forests maintained that once a compartment was dropped from Keating's list, on the grounds that no export woodchips would come from the compartment, there was no need to ensure that the timber was not used for woodchips.

Another area of concern is the proposed Yabba Nature Reserve where a log dump is planned for the middle of a stand of oldgrowth Brushbox. The forest is pristine Booyong rainforest on rich red soil with ancient Brushbox, Tallowwood and Blue gum towering over the canopy. This compartment was also identified by Senator Faulkner as being of high conservation value but was not protected from logging as there was no proof of export woodchips

coming from the compartment. Despite this area being identified by State Forests' Botanist for reservation, State Forests still plan to log the compartment.

The Toonumbar Environment Centre and NEFA need your help to ensure these compartments are not logged and to push for the establishment of Richmond Range National Park. Letters saying that you support the Richmond Range National Park boundaries as proposed by the Toonumbar Environment Centre and that the area should be immediately placed under moratorium until assessments have taken place and the final boundaries of the Park are set should be sent to:

Bob Carr, State Premier; Pam Allen, Minister for the Environment; and Kim Yeadon, Minister for Land and Water Conservation; all C/- Parliament House, Macquarie St, Sydney, 2000.

Source: G Beyer, TEC.

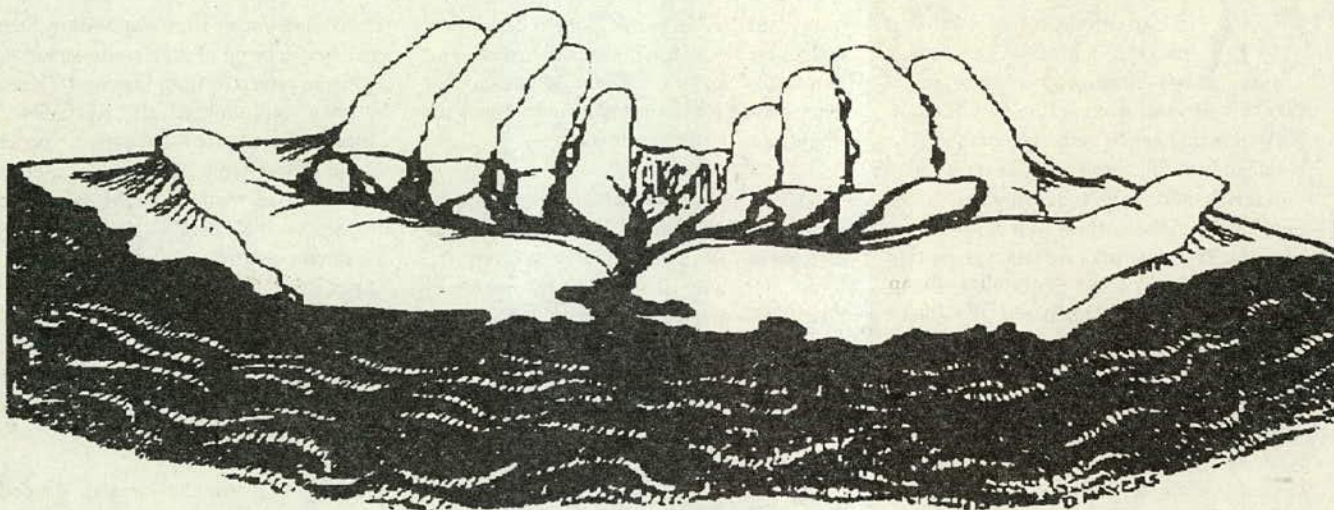


X

19.

# Putting the "CARE" back into LANDCARE

*A vision for the landcare movement*



Like most good ideas the Landcare movement has been subjected to a degree of roting. Stacked TCM committees, and the use of the Landcare name to launder the intent of some groups, have, to some extent, eroded the principles of the movement. It is refreshing to see, that at the grass roots level, the ethos that inspired Landcare is alive and well. The following is a speech by Terrence Hudson, of the Upper Taylor's Arm Landcare Group, given at the National Landcare Conference, Saturday 8th July, 1995, Port Macquarie.

Firstly, I would like to say how uplifting it is to feel the "wind of change" blowing across our country. The "wind" that blew us together from all walks of life and belief systems, to form a common bond to care for our country. I would like to thank, all the landcarers and acknowledge that our time is freely given for the good of our country.

As the landcare ethic grew around the country, the catch cry of "think globally, act locally" began to take focus and direction. We found that we can address large global problems, like provide oxygen...control water pollution...prevent erosion...all without leaving our local area, and, we can see almost immediate results. We know the type of environment we want for ourselves and our children. We want to hear the laughter of our children as they splash about in clear water. We want the creeks full of yabbies and fish. We want to retain Wallaby...Koala...Goanna. They cannot exist without a food source...shelter...and safety. If we are to retain a wildlife population, we must set aside part of our farmland for them. This means not clearing to the waters edge, and planting flowering and fruiting native species. Consider the benefits of vegetated streambanks...Not only can we alleviate streambank erosion, but we can also provide habitat and a food source for a multitude of duck...fish...spoonbill...and water lizard... If we continue to clean up the rubbish, where will they raise their young? 80% of marsupials and 20% of birds depend on hollows in trees. We must look at "dead" trees in a different light...they may be someone's home.

My message to landcare groups is... "When you are preparing your strategies, please provide for our non-human fellow creatures. If planning a farm forestry project, consider how many lives you can support as well as your own, by providing shelter...fruit and...nectar. When we sit down to our "farm plans" or "catchment plans", we must keep in mind

- the encouragement of vegetated streambanks
- the rehabilitation of degraded habitat
- the retainment of native grasses
- and the preservation of our native forests.

I'd like to bring your attention to the difference between the plantations of timber that are designed specifically for harvest practices, and the rich habitat environment of the native forests. Uneven canopies of diverse species, with live, dead and dying vegetation, which supports a vast range of inhabitants.

Our groups vision is "a corridor of native vegetation, running the full length of the watercourse with connections to selected pockets and large forested tracks of country, ensuring free travel for our wildlife". We know we will have the occasional wedgetail or hawk steal our poultry, or wallabies eat down our newly planted fruit trees, and it is frustrating... but to consider a world without them, is just too sad to contemplate.

If we can collectively see this vision of abundance for all, and act upon our beliefs, this beautiful country of ours will respond with a flourish of growth and an array of species so diverse all our lives and children's lives will be boundlessly enriched...

Thankyou...

Sarah



**THE NATURAL HEALTH CLINIC**

**Belinda Foley** DIP. HOM. ASS. M.A.I.H.

**HOMOEOPATHY**

**NATUROPATH**

Member of the Australian Traditional Medicine Society

Iridology Biochemic Tissue Therapy

Nutritional Advice Relaxation Techniques

Stress Management Flower Essences

**11a Princess Street, Macksville**

**Telephone (065) 683 337**



# \$100,000 Reward

*For the first person who can show that any one of the following statements is untrue*

\$100,000.00 has been placed into a special account at the Bank One (61 North Sandusky Street, Delaware, Ohio) by the Safe Water Foundation (hereinafter referred to as SWF) and will be paid to the first person who provides proof in writing that any of the above statements made in this "Did you Know" flyer is false. Claims must be substantive. No claim that relies on an opinion, ambiguity, typographical error, or a technicality will be valid. All claims along with all documents to substantiate the claims must be sent to Safe Water Foundation, 6439 Taggart Road, Delaware, OHIO 43015 and received on or before noon, December 15, 1995. A claim must consist of the claimant's best effort to criticise each of the above statements with supporting documentation provided for each case. In the event the claimant does not wish to take issue with one or more of the above statements, he/she must list these statements and write the words "not contested" after each of the statements. Each claim must be signed. Each claim must contain the name, address and telephone number of the claimant. Any claim which does not contain the above information will be disqualified. All claims will become the property of the Safe Water Foundation. The SWF may not use the fact that a claimant wrote "not contested" after a statement as proof that the claimant admits to the veracity of the statement. Patrons, contractees, or those associated with the SWF are ineligible. (To prevent frivolous claims, a \$50.00 deposit is required; the deposit will be returned to all persons who show that any of these statements is false.) On December 31, 1995, the results will be announced.

## Did You Know?

- That according to the handbook, Clinical Toxicology of Commercial Products, fluoride is more poisonous than lead and just slightly less poisonous than arsenic.

- That according to the Physicians' Desk Reference: "In hypersensitive individuals, fluorides occasionally cause skin eruptions such as atopic dermatitis, eczema, or urticaria. Gastric distress, headache, and weakness have also been reported. These hypersensitive reactions usually disappear promptly upon discontinuation of the fluoride."

*"10,000 or more fluoridation-linked cancer deaths occur yearly in the United States."*

- That the Canadian Dental Association recommends: "Fluoride supplements should not be recommended for children less than three years old".

- That from 1990 to 1992, the Journal of the American Medical Association published three separate articles linking increased hip fracture rates to fluoride in the water.

- That in the March 22, 1990 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine, Mayo Clinic researchers reported that fluoride treatment of osteoporosis increased bone fracture rate and bone fragility.

*"tooth decay statistics for 12-13 year old children showed that fluoridation had no significant effect on the decay rate of permanent teeth"*

- That a study by Proctor and Gamble showed that as little as half the amount of fluoride used to fluoridate public water supplies resulted in a sizeable and significant increase in genetic damage.

- That in 1993, researchers from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences admitted: "in cultured human and rodent cells, the weight of the evidence leads to the conclusion that fluoride exposure results in increased chromosome aberrations (genetic damage)".

- That the research of Dr Dean Burk, former Chief Chemist of the National Cancer Institute, showed that 10,000 or more fluoridation-linked cancer deaths occur yearly in the United States.

- That in the largest U.S. study on fluoridation and tooth decay, United States Public Health Service dental records of over 39,000 schoolchildren, ages 5-17, from 84 areas around the United States showed that the number of decayed, missing and filled permanent teeth (DMFT) per child was virtually the same in fluoridated and nonfluoridated areas.

- That Dr John Colquhoun, former Chief Dental Officer of the Department of Health for Auckland, New Zealand, investigated tooth decay statistics from about 60,000 12-13 year old children and showed that fluoridation had no significant effect on the decay rate of permanent teeth.

- That according to the October 1987 issue of the Journal of the Canadian Dental Association: "Survey results in British Columbia with only 11 per cent of the population using fluoridated water show lower average DMFT (tooth decay) rates than provinces with 40-70 per cent of the population drinking fluoridated water" and "school districts recently reporting the highest caries-free rates in the province were totally unfluoridated".

- That in 1993, the Subcommittee on Health Effects of Ingested Fluoride of the National Research Council admitted that 8% of the children living in areas fluoridated with the amount of fluoride recommended by promoters of fluoridation have dental fluorosis (fluoride poisoning).

Source: The Australian Fluoridation News, Vol 31 No.1, Jan-Feb 1995



105.9 FM STEREO  
24 HOUR  
Your Community  
Access Radio  
Phone: (065) 647 777 Fax (065) 647 647



## Acid Sulphate Soils Management Plan

Last week the NSW Government announced it had mapped out 4000 square kilometres of coastal land at risk from acid soil, which costs an estimated \$2 billion in lost production each year.

About 30 percent of land within 10 km of the coast has a high probability of being affected by acid soils. The areas include the Tweed Flood Plain, the Richmond Flood Plain, the Lower Clarence, the Lower Macleay, Tuggerah Lakes, the Sydney region and the Lower Shoalhaven.

Guidelines, produced by the EPA, which are designed to assist developers, consultants and land managers in planning developments to prevent environmental degradation, damage to infrastructure and loss of agricultural activity are free and will be available from EPA offices, the ASS Information Officer (066 240319) and through EPA's Pollution Line (131555).

The Acid Sulphate Soils Management Advisory Committee is also currently working on an Acid Sulphate Soil field manual and industry guidelines which are likely to be available by the end of the year.

The North Coast Environment Council, while welcoming the release of the maps and the community education campaign, was more cautious. Spokesperson Lyn Orrego said "The claim...that Acid Sulfate Soils (ASS) are 'manageable' is wishful thinking. ASS are only truly manageable if the government regulates to prohibit them from being excavated for drains, canals or other development; and if they commit to a massive restoration project to 'fix up' the current and continuing disasters from previous disturbance of these soils."

Source: South East Regional Ripples,  
Vol 2 Number 2, July 1995  
Lyn Orrego Media Release



## DAISY HILL FOREST KOALA CENTRE

*Australians For Animals unveils Queensland's grand gesture to Koalas*

There they sit, two little koalas about 14 months old, clutching the tree stump with its plastic leaves, munching away at fresh eucalypt leaves which are contained in a vase arrangement strapped onto the thin stump.

Their enclosure is a pit in the middle of a walkway inside the building. There's no access to the outside, no fresh air, no sunshine, no wind, no rain. And in this miserable place, the koalas live, 24 hours a day.

This is the Queensland Government's grand gesture to koalas. Not only will they whack an 8 lane tollway right through the middle of their habitat, but now the government is hell bent on turning koalas into some kind of obscene curiosity item. Something that sits in a tree stump surrounded by plastic leaves, denied its natural behavioural needs and habitat.

Afraid to hold an opening ceremony at Daisy Hill because of the massive public protests which would erupt, the Queensland government has only recently thrown open the doors of its much touted \$1.8 million koala centre.

The koalas are kept in conditions which are, in AFA's opinion, a breach of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. We've been told by a spokesperson for the NSW Zoo Industry that when koalas cannot exercise, they forget how to climb. Sometimes, they get muscular atrophy which may require physiotherapy.

They can't keep their claws trimmed because there's no real trees to use. Koalas



don't self groom, they need the rain to clean themselves. Koalas need sunshine, they need play, they need to be able to bask in the warmth of the bush, surrounded by the creatures with whom they share their habitat.

Their incarceration at Daisy Hill State Forest Koala Centre is a complete denial of koala's natural behavioural needs. The "display" sets a cruel precedent which must be stopped at all costs.

The koalas have absolutely no protection from the public. If some fruitcake turned up and decided to start throwing things at the animals, there's no protection. During the time AFA was there, we saw no one near the koalas, they were left quite vulnerable.

Then there's two really interesting display signs which aroused AFA's attention. The first one shows the koala habitat in SE Queensland and the threats. But there's no mention of the South Coast Motorway which will go slap bang through the entire habitat, killing 300 koalas initially, destroying over 2,000 ha of forest, condemning the koalas to extinction. Another display downstairs asserts that "koalas live between 3-5 years and in captivity they have been known to live at least 12 years." This is an outrageous lie as any biologist will tell you. And further proof of the new lie which is being used to justify locking animals up. "They live longer in captivity".

Source: Australians For Animals Bulletin  
e 1995

### State Of Origin Koala Wipeout





# HIT THE ROAD JACQUES

## The Struggle For A Nuclear Free South Pacific

The announcement by French President Jacques Chirac that France will recommence Nuclear testing at Moruroa Atoll in Tahiti has been met with condemnation throughout the world. Although the Commonwealth Government has reacted with limpid sluggishness to the resumption of tests, the reaction of the Australian people has more than made up for their leaders' weakness. Scarcely a day passes without news of the escalating consumer boycott, refusal by maritime unions to touch French ships, French aircraft not being refuelled, Bastille Day takings being donated to Greenpeace, the list goes on and on. In Bowraville a travelling perfume salesman was constantly assailed with the question "Are they French?" (much to his detriment they were, his visit was without success).

Rejecting French products is an ideal way for the Australian people to express their anger in a non-violent manner. Lets face it, it feels good to greet them with a mental expletive and take the friendlier product (beside the French one) into our homes. It may also be the only way to make Chirac and his colleagues reconsider their position on the tests. Pointing out that the testing of Nuclear weapons in Moruroa is morally wrong won't do any good if the men we are protesting to aren't that well equipped in the moral department. The only thing that is going to make the French Government take notice is the French business community banging on the table, yelling in their ears, that their profits have taken a dive deeper than Jacques Costeau.

It should be noted that the French Government has been especially co-operative in galvanising us against it, strengthening our resolve to retaliate as individuals. From the arrogant and patronising response to concern over the resumption of testing, to the storming of the Rainbow Warrior by 150 armed personnel and the tear-gassing of those on board, Chirac and his cronies have not sought to diffuse the situation by being likeable.

Another constructive way of venting our anger is by supporting the independence movement in Kanaky (New Caledonia). Susanna Ounei-Small, assistant director of

the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (the secretariat of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement), argued the case for independence in an interview with Norm Dixon of Green Left Weekly.

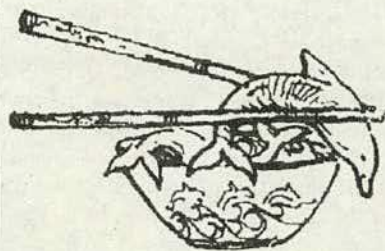
"The only sure way to end French nuclear tests once and for all is for France to surrender control of Kanaky, Tahiti and the islands of Wallis and Futuna", she said. "France started nuclear testing in Tahiti in the '60s, after the people of Algeria won their independence. Nuclear tests had taken place there in the Sahara. Nuclear testing is an the extension of the colonisation of Tahiti. Today the Moahi people want their independence as well. Decolonisation is very important. It is the only way to denuclearise that the French cannot reverse."

Looking for a real taste sensation on your next holiday??

Come to

### Club Med Moruroa

Where the seafood's always cooked



before it leaves the ocean

### French Products to Avoid

**Cars:** Citroen, Peugeot, Renault

**Cheese:** Lactos, Cradle Valley, all French imported cheeses eg Baby Bel, Port Salut. Examine labels carefully.

**Beverages:** Champagnes; Bolinger, Dom Perignon, Moet, Veuve Clicquot etc

**Wines:** Coolabah, Morris, Craigmoor, Jacobs Creek, Orlando, Wyndham Estate

**Water:** Evian, Perrier, Vittel, Volvic

**Cognacs and Liqueurs:** Courvosier, Remy, Cointreau, Grand Marnier etc

**Building Materials:** Seal-N-Flex, Multi Bond, Super Bond, Timber Bond, Plasta Masta

**Catering:** Gardner Merchant (caterers for Sydney Opera House)

**Cosmetics, Clothing, Perfume:** Clarins, Chanel, Christian Dior, Guerlian, Ella Bache, Damari thermal

underwear, Yves Rocher, Lacoste, Pierre Cardin, Yves Saint Laurent, L'Oreal Haircare

**Hotels:** Club Med, Novotel Hotels

**Luggage:** Louis Vitton

**Mustard:** Temeraire (Dijon, Whole Grain)

**Pharmaceutical:** Aspro Clear, Rennie's

**Razors:** Bic

**Stationery:** Bic pens, Glu Stik, Glitter Art, Rolla Stick

**Suncare:** Ambre Solaire

**Telecommunications:** Alcatel phones

**Tyres:** Michelin

**Companies (among those listed as French enterprises by the French Chamber of Commerce):** Air France, Aqua-lung Australia (diving equipment), Banque Nationale de Paris, Delta Software, Pearl and Dean Group (media agency), Shepparton Distilleries (fruit spirits), Visit Australia (inbound and outbound tours).

Source: Peace Action, July/August 1995.





THE NEW WORLD ORDER.

"A victory for the independence movement in Kanaky will also help rid the Pacific of nuclear weapons", Ounei-Small pointed out. "France has been able to become an economic and nuclear power due to the wealth accumulated from the exploitation of colonies throughout the world in the past, and the continued exploitation of its Pacific colonies, especially Kanaky".

Kanaky is the second largest source of nickel exports in the world, and has about 33% of the world's known reserves of the mineral. The island is also rich in chrome and cobalt, metals used extensively for military purposes. The seabeds around Kanaky are rich in strategic minerals. Seven million square kilometres of Pacific Ocean are enclosed in the exclusive economic zones of France's colonies. Ounei-Small said that the sea around Kanaky may contain up to three times the mineral wealth of the land. French companies have huge investments in mining ventures and the tourist industry.

"We must also talk about indirect colonisation. The superpowers - the US and other Western powers - apply economic

pressure all the time to undermine our little countries. This is so obvious in the Pacific. The US indirectly oppresses the people of the Pacific by forcing governments to expose their economies to the free market economy and insisting on privatisation. The US, France and the other powers accumulate big wealth by taking the resources of their colonies and Third World countries."

Neither is the Australian government innocent. In 1987, Australia was the biggest investor in the Pacific islands, with holdings valued at \$1.6 billion. The Australian government proudly boasted that Australian companies have an "enormous influence on the economies of the Pacific". Australia exports five times more, mainly manufactured and processed foodstuffs, to the region than it imports, primarily minerals and raw materials.

These economic interests make Australia a key partner with the French and US. This may account for the reluctance on behalf of the Australian Government to take any strong action against their French counterparts. Since the signing of the Matignon Accords in 1988, Australian trade and investment in Kanaky has increased significantly. Military contacts with France in New Caledonia have increased. Last September the French minister for

overseas departments and territories, Dominique Perben, visited Canberra and met with Prime Minister Keating and other senior ministers to discuss increased trade with New Caledonia and Tahiti. The Pacnews agency reported in October that Australian and New Zealand military "observers" participated in the French military's "Nord '94" military exercise that mobilised 1000 soldiers, police and aircraft in a "regional conflict scenario".

Australia's willingness to sell uranium to France made it France's "best ally" in the region, Ounei-Small told Green Left Weekly. "Australia is yelling in front of everybody that the French nuclear tests must stop, but behind the scenes they are reinforcing the position of France by selling them uranium. They are the best ally of and the warranty for France, as the tests that will poison the whole Pacific begin in Tahiti."

## Australia's Role in the Nuclear World Order

*With A Government Like This Who Needs Enemies.*

The Australian government's gentle protests over French nuclear testing plans cannot conceal Australia's role in creating and maintaining the nuclear danger. Australian diplomats were among the firmest in pushing for extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) without any limitations on the five nuclear powers whose monopoly the treaty protects. And Australian uranium is an important component of the international nuclear regime - ironically including, in at least a few cases, French weapons production.

After winning government in 1983 Prime Minister Bob Hawke strongly criticised French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Meanwhile, in August he gave the go-ahead

*Nudists,  
Don't bother chasing the sun  
At  
Club Med Moruroa*

*You can get your all-over tan  
from the inside out*

**dale print**

**Complete Commercial  
Printing Service**

*"Continuing  
the  
tradition"*

at

**18 WEST STREET  
MACKSVILLE • 68-2296**

**GANTER'S  
LANDSCAPING  
SUPPLIES**

Cnr Pacific Hwy and Valla Beach Rd,  
Valla. Phone 065) 695 280

Soils  
Manures  
Sleepers  
Bushrock  
Plants  
Mulches  
Sand & Gravel

Free helpful advice for DIY's  
Hours: 7.15 - 4.30 Mon - Fri  
7.15 - 12 Sat



for mining at Roxby Downs. Hawke authorised Roxby export licences until 1996, and Ranger and Nabarlek licences until 1988. In January 1988, Energy Resources Australia (ERA), which owns Ranger, signed a contract with the major French electricity utility to supply 100 tonnes of uranium each year from 1988 to 1998.

The contract showed that the uranium industry was gearing up for another push to expand. The case was kicked off by a report from South Australian Labor backbencher Gordon Bilney in mid-May 1988. Bilney claimed that uranium exports could be expanded to generate an additional \$5 billion in revenue by 1992, including \$1.5 billion in government revenue. Nuclear Disarmament Party Senator Jo Vallentine argued on May 19, 1988: "If Australians consider that there are good reasons for not mining uranium, like the end use to which it could be put, the environmental costs of mining and the problems of radioactive wastes, then no amount of financial inducements justify the expansion of uranium mining." Prior to the 1994 ALP conference, Senator Bob Collins, minister for primary industry and a member of the ALP right, and Gordon Bilney, minister for Pacific island affairs and a member of the centre-left faction, both publicly called for the current three-mines policy to be scrapped. Bilney said that Australia, already supplying 10% of the world's uranium market, could raise the level to 30% if the policy was changed.

One of the arguments for the export of Australian uranium is that it can be "permitted subject to stringent conditions of supply designed to strengthen the non-proliferation regime". This argument received an airing in the Slatyer (Australian Science and Technology Council) report commissioned by Hawke in 1983 to justify the change in ALP policy. Greenpeace responded at the time by pointing to a dilemma:

"The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) combines the contradictory role of promoting nuclear power while trying to prevent the diversion of nuclear materials to weapons production.

"The link between the civilian and military industry is obvious. Nuclear reactors produce plutonium, suitable for weapons production, during normal operations ... The task for the IAEA is impossible."

Major concerns were raised in 1988 that Australian uranium might still be finding its way into weapons through the practice of "flag swapping" between uranium sellers

under the aegis of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The concern about "flag swaps" arose in February 1988, when a dismissed employee from Nukem, the West German uranium brokerage and fuel-cycle firm embroiled in a bribery scandal, sent confidential internal documents from Nukem to a Green Party MP in the European Parliament and to the West German magazine *Der Spiegel*. Confidential Euratom memos revealed three types of uranium "swaps", all of which can happen without any actual movement of materials. The leaked Nukem documents contain details of "flag-swapping"

deals, in which uranium supplies are given false origins in order to appear to comply with safeguards.

One such documented deal resulted in Australian uranium being enriched to weapons grade, for use in the Institut Laue-Langevin reactor in Grenoble, France, in violation of Australian safeguards. However, according to Nukem, by the time this happened the uranium concerned was, on paper, of US, not Australian, origin. The then minister for resources, Peter Cook, responded to questions from Democrat Senator Norm Sanders and

## What is there to test? (A Conspiracy Theory)

Since the US developed the Atomic Bomb during World War II there have been 2,000 nuclear tests, estimated to have spread enough radiation to cause between 300,000 and 3 million terminal cancer cases. Despite the risks involved, members of the nuclear club have been keen to conduct tests; with not only the French, but also the US and probably the Chinese also planning to resume testing in the near future. Considering the expense, and misgivings about nuclear weapons held by a significant portion of the population, there must be some very important data to be obtained from these tests, although what it could be is a mystery.

For example, it is well known that nuclear warheads are very destructive when exploded. Does it really matter if your bomb only flattens everything in a ten square kilometre radius instead of twelve, or it only produces enough radiation to poison everything within eighty kilometres instead of one hundred? Is your nuclear arsenal's capacity as a deterrent (and that's all these things are meant to be) going to be diminished in some way if you don't know to the centimetre how big of a hole its going to leave in the ground? Clearly there must be some hidden agenda in nuclear testing; some kind of mad and sinister experiment lurking under the dissipating mushroom cloud.

Consider this. According to the documentary, "Moruroa - The Big Secret", the military maintain a heavy control of the hospitals and statistics on cancers and birth deformities for "French" Polynesia. Just suppose what is being tested at Moruroa is not just (or even) the blast itself, but the long term health effects on people being exposed to the radiation produced, the kinds monitored in the aforementioned statistics. If you were going to test these effects on humans, the best place to do it would be somewhere where you knew exactly what they were being exposed to; no acid rain, photochemical smog or nasty Chernobyl incidents to corrupt the data. Somewhere like an island in the South Pacific.

If this sounds a bit far fetched, just remember that the US did just this to its own people in the fifties, and the Menzies Government invited the British to nuke Maralinga with questionable regard for the indigenous people of the area, and anyone who happened to be in the path of the radioactive cloud as it was blown across the countryside.

## Rainforest seed collective

NEWSLETTER



Help preserve rainforest in your area



Become a member, and receive a quarterly newsletter with heaps of information on regeneration & seeds for sale



Send subscription to:  
Rainforest Seed Collective  
PMB Bellingen NSW 2454  
or phone (066) 55-2233



Yearly subscription  
\$20 or \$15 concession  
free for seed suppliers



Nuclear Disarmament Party Senator Rob Wood, by claiming, "In the Grenoble case ... Australia was not responsible for the uranium enriched at that research facility". In a ministerial statement on April 20 1988, Cook washed the government's hands of safeguards on Australian uranium designed to prevent the development of weapons grade material once it had reached Euratom's sphere of responsibility.

Speaking on the eve of the 1994 Hiroshima Day anniversary, WA Greens Senator Dee Margetts made the link between the nuclear fuel cycle and nuclear weapons production: "By 2003, commercial nuclear power reactors will produce sufficient surplus plutonium to build another 47,000 nuclear weapons. The world currently has 425 reactors in 30 countries, which gives each of these countries the potential to develop their own nuclear capability."

**A**n area of increasing interest to the Australian uranium and nuclear industry is Indonesian plans to build 12 nuclear reactors on the earthquake-prone island of Java. The first US \$3 billion plant, to be built 30 km from the "extinct" Mt Merapi volcano, has been brought forward, according to an announcement in August by the head of Indonesia's Atomic Energy Agency (BATAN). The reactor favoured by Indonesia is a Westinghouse-Mitsubishi pressurised water type (PWR) similar to the one which nearly melted down in 1979 on Three Mile Island. In February 1991 a Westinghouse-Mitsubishi PWR almost melted down at Mihama in Japan.

Writing to the Australian Conservation Foundation in 1993, foreign affairs and trade minister Gareth Evans said that Indonesia's decision on nuclear power "could ultimately put it at the forefront of regional development in terms of modern nuclear technology ... it is in Australia's interest that there be close contact and cooperation in this area". While Evans has remained coy on the contents of the Australia-Indonesia Nuclear Science and Cooperation Agreement, signed in 1993, he has admitted to "informal" talks on supplying Indonesia with uranium.

The uranium industry is less inhibited. The Japanese company involved in building the first reactor, the Mitsubishi consortium tied to Kansai Electric, is also a 10% stakeholder in ERA and a partner in the Japan-Australia Uranium Resources Development Company. In 1991 a delegation of BATAN officials visited ERA's Ranger mine, later announcing that Indonesia would be happy to import Australian uranium. Prior to that a deal was set between Ranger and Olympic Ponds, which also supplies Kansai

with uranium, to split uranium sales to Indonesia fifty-fifty.

Australian government claims that cooperation between the two countries will "provide ... assurance that high safety standards continue to be maintained" have been met with scepticism by environmental campaigners. Greenpeace's Jean McSorley said that if the Australian government had serious concerns about the environmental impact of nuclear power, "they would not be supporting Indonesia's program to go nuclear".

Australia has a lot to gain from peace and stability in the region, and a lot to lose from the political instability that can ensue from nuclear capability. The end result of uranium mining is a highly dangerous radioactive waste for which there is still no safe, permanent method of disposal as well as the danger of nuclear accidents. The message is clear -

**uranium should stay in the ground.**

*Source: Green Left Weekly*

## EDITORIAL

There was never any doubt about what the feature story for this issue was going to be. From the moment Jacques Chirac dropped his bombshell, France's planned resumption of nuclear testing has hardly been out of the headlines. Since I put together my little diatribe, the Australian Government has lifted its game in the protest stakes. They have, after two months of pussyfooting around, actually managed to offend their French counterparts by not letting a French firm tender for a defence contract. By finally taking part in the consumer boycott that the community at large has been waging against France, they have helped force Mr Chirac to at least consider the point that resuming the tests was not a very good idea. Money talks louder than any other non-violent action, and probably louder than most violent ones too. It has been disturbing to hear the argument from some economic anylists in the corporate sector that a consumer or trade boycott is likely to hurt Australia more than France, and such action by the proletariat is therefore unwise. If its true that the New World Order and the Global Economy dictate that people living in a country with a balance of payments problem must surrender their right to exercise their moral outrage, then it's time to do to those institutions what Chirac intends to do to Moruroa Atoll.

The article by Lisa Macdonald on the cons and cons of woodchipping was too good to leave out. While I am making a concious effort to concentrate on postive things that are going on, there will always be a need for factually based articulate arguments like Lisa's article, and there will always be a need for militancy. Which brings us to the Australians For Animals contributions to this issue. The infuriating Daisy Hill saga makes you wonder what Governments in this country really think about Koalas. Considering they are a national icon and an endangered species, you'd think our elected leaders would be trying to protect them, not wipe them out with a State Of Origin syle competetive zeal. If one state sanctions the clearfelling of core Koala habitat, the next hits back by clearfelling core Koala habitat and putting a tollway through the middle of it. We can only wonder what the next step will be, hopefully the Queensland election result will inspire them to err on the side of caution.

Om Gaia,  
Tom.



# INDUSTRIAL FORESTS

## THE NEW BUZZ WORD



*Australians For Animals wonders if plantation forestry really is the environmentally friendly saviour of the timber industry, or just another good idea being implimented with scant regard for what it was proposed to save.*

Not long after the ALP Government won office in NSW, our co-ordinator obtained an appointment with Patrick Holland who acts as advisor to the Minister for the Environment, Hon. Pam Allen.

AFA was anxious to place before the Minister the huge public concern about the destruction of koala habitat in NSW. We provided details of the problems at Port Stephens, and Tweed Shire in particular. Other issues included the revolting koala mauling which continues on at Australia's Wonderland; the SEPP 44, the coalition's lousy planning policy for koalas; and the lack of any habitat protection in spite of all the hype.

The meeting was a disappointing experience. Holland's response to AFA's concerns could be summed up in the same old sentence he kept trotting out: "What do you expect the Government to do about it?" Not a particularly gratifying response from a new government.

### Plantation Forestry

AFA has major concerns about plantation forestry, an important plank of the Carr Government. We have seen evidence of some appalling practices in the Byron Bay hinterland which serve as an example of the new government's policy.

On a private landholder's acreage, the NSW State Forests clearfelled a rainforest growing in precious red soil on a slope in excess of one in eight. The clearing took place so that a monoculture of eucalyptus could be planted.

"This is the platform of our forestry policy" says Holland "Planting forests on degraded land".

Now anyone with a grain of environmental commonsense knows that you don't plant monocultures on degraded land. No, no, not unless you want to degrade the land further. And what about the wildlife that will, even in a monoculture, find some opportunities to establish territory as the forest grows.

### What happens to the creatures?

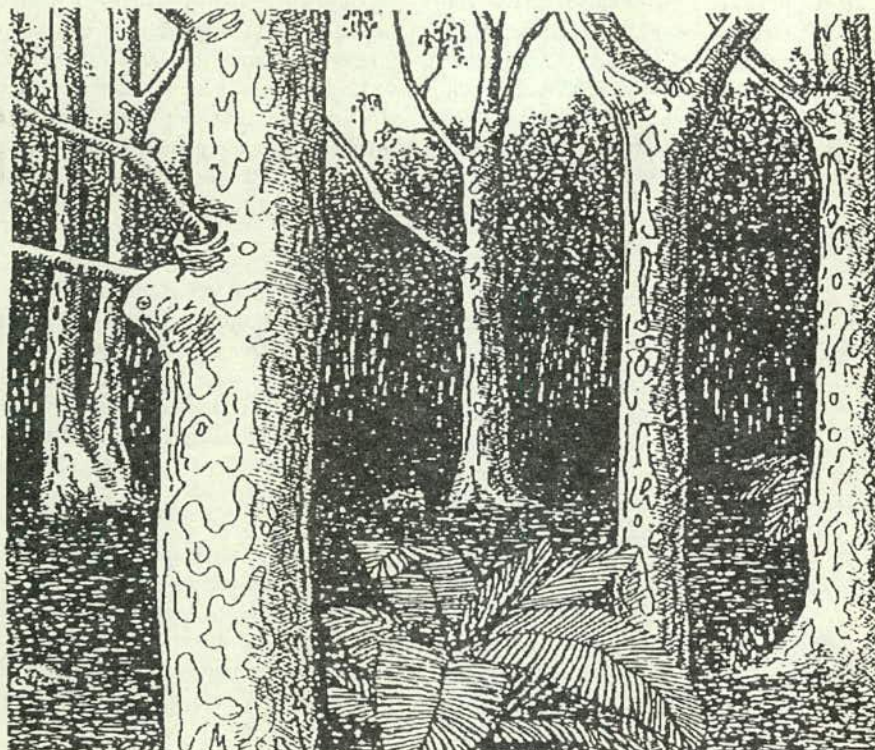
Holland responded by saying that plantation forestry was based on the concept of "industrial forests". An astounding statement. A genuinely obscene new terminology in politically correct language. If trees are going to become industrial units, then what will the wildlife become? Industrial slaves? Sacrificial victims? The new terminology further degrades nature, transforming living creatures and the sacred web of life into economic mumbo jumbo.

Now the same conservation groups who won't speak out against the kangaroo kill are promoting plantation forestry. AFA says that it's a crime to plant monocultures anywhere. Replanted forests need high diversity, as complete a planting of the local guilds of seedbanks as can be achieved. Naturally, these forests will soon attract wildlife, birds, insects, earth critters so that the web of life can expand bringing in more life.

How can we possibly agree with a policy which says that 20 years down the track that forest with its life support system must be exterminated? We need to be replanting forests for our own life support systems, not creating plantations based on poor environmental practices.

Hemp presents an ideal opportunity to replace trees as a source of paper, cardboard, and many other bi-products. Already it is being trialled and grown successfully in several states. No government ever talks about recycling timber or the fact that most of our precious forests are being woodchipped for an export market we cannot afford to support. Not in the interests of passing a healthy earth on to our children and their children.

Source: *Australians For Animals Bulletin*, May 1995





# THE REAL CHOICE IN THE WOODCHIPPING DEBATE

*"It's not jobs or the environment. It's both or neither"*

*Export woodchipping of native forests has been one of the most controversial environmental issues in Australia in recent times. With over half of Australia's original forests cleared, and only a small proportion of old growth forests protected, the case to end woodchipping seems clear to environmentalists. Timber workers and their families, however, see the issue as one of environmentalists trying to take their jobs away. This article shows that the real threat to their jobs is elsewhere.*

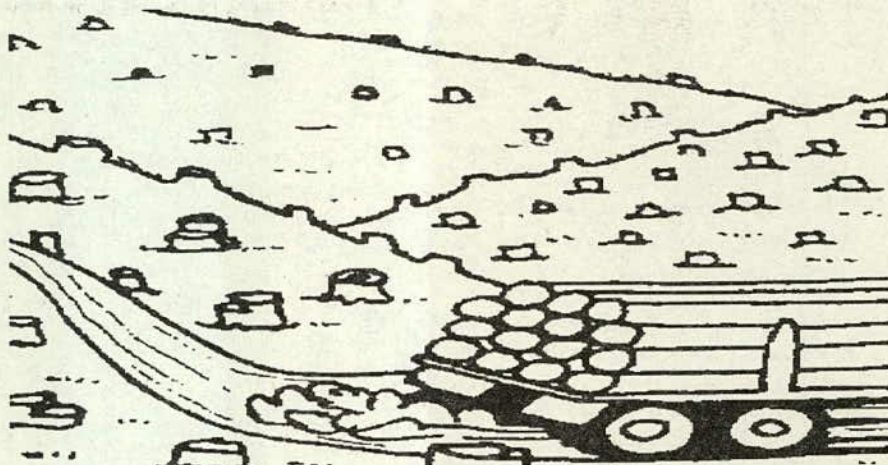
By Lisa Macdonald

The blockade of Parliament House in Canberra by 4,000 timber workers has narrowed the terms of the export woodchipping licence debate to a question of "jobs versus environment". Yet all of the available information on employment in the timber industry indicates that posing the question this way is false.

The dispute is not about protecting worker's jobs. It is not even about whether Australia will continue to export woodchips. The big woodchip export companies try to pose the issues that way to hide the real issue: whether they will continue to receive hundreds of millions of dollars in government subsidies.

The timber companies are able to meet their demand for woodchips from plantation timber. They do not do so only because they are being subsidised to destroy irreplaceable old growth forests.

The workers' blockade of Parliament House resulted in major concessions being given by the Keating government to the industry in the quarrel over 1995 woodchip export licences. But the workers, along with out native forests, will be the real losers. The



only winners will be the woodchip export corporations.

The Resource Assessment Commission (RAC) report of 1992 estimated that 40,700 people (about 0.5% of the Australian work force) are employed in forestry, contracting, log sawmilling, resawn timber, veneer and boards, woodchipping and pulp and paper production. This amounts to 3% of the total manufacturing work force.

## Chipping away at jobs

Employment in the industry has fallen by about 40% in the last 25 years. Yet in the same period the amount of timber extracted from forests rose by 40%. Capital-intensive woodchipping - the very sector that the Canberra blockade is campaigning to strengthen - is the major reason for this decline in jobs.

Australia's main forestry export is woodchips, which account for 74% of forest products export earnings (1988-89). But while the woodchip export sector utilises

about 45% of native forest timber, it employs less than 2% of the timber work force, about 800 jobs nationally.

Clearfelling for woodchipping is highly mechanised and therefore can extract and process vast amounts of wood with very few workers. As Justice Stewart said in his forest and timber inquiry draft report in 1991, "Australia is in the process of restructuring an industry from one that is labour intensive...to one that is equipment intensive".

The fact that woodchip-driven forest management is costing jobs is most clearly seen in Tasmania, which supplies 40% of Australia's total woodchips and where jobs in the industry decreased by 25% between 1971 and 1991 alongside a simultaneous 260% increase in wood consumption by Tasmanian mills.

The timber companies are destroying jobs for the same reason any company destroys them: it's profitable. According to Dr Robert Bain, executive director of the National Association of Forest Industries, "Every timber company is doing very well at the

**2 BBB - FM**  
your community  
radio

now on

**93.3 and 107.5 MHz**  
for current affairs  
and environmental shows  
(066) 551 888



present time, and the timber divisions are making major contributions to returns".

Throughout 1994, pulp prices in the timber products market in the US and Australia jumped 80%. Fourth quarter reports now being lodged by North American timber products groups, usually closely mirrored by those in Australia, show almost all with improved earnings and many with record profits.



## Subsidies

A major contribution to the timber corporations' healthy profits is the enormous subsidies of the industry by government through the underpricing of native forests when logging royalties are set.

A number of organisations, including the National Plantations Advisory Council, Victoria's auditor general and the Industry Commission, have concluded that state governments have been selling timber from native forests for well below its true value.

A recent Victorian study concludes that the state government spends \$91 million annually to provide sawlogs to timber companies, but receives only \$41 million in royalties. In other words, Victorians are paying the timber industry \$50 million a year to cut down the forests. According to Dr Clive Hamilton, environmental economist and director of the newly established Australia Institute in Canberra, "this figure turns out to be a very conservative estimate - the true figure is more like \$300 million".

According to a 1992 study by the Economic Planning and Advisory Council, Australian taxpayers have provided subsidies

to the timber industry in the order of \$5 billion in the last 70 years. The total subsidies provided by state forestry agencies are now in the order of \$170 million per year. As Hamilton points out, "These subsidies pumped into the industry by governments mean jobs are not created in other parts of the economy".

These large subsidies also create a serious price gap between native forest timber and plantation timber, which operates as a powerful disincentive for investment in native hardwood plantations.

For example, APPM in Tasmania is currently charged a royalty of just \$2.21 per tonne on hardwood from crown land for its Burnie pulp mill. According to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, hardwood from its own plantations costs the company up to \$13 per tonne to harvest. Until the government subsidy stops, it will remain cheaper to exploit native forests than to develop hardwood plantations.

The first experimental plantings of native and exotic species were in the 1860s. By the early 1990s, pine was by far the most widely used species. In the early 1960s, a plan to become self-sufficient in softwood by the year 2000 began. Several *Softwood Forestry Agreement Acts* were enacted throughout the next 20 years, with a general trend of diminishing federal support. Today there are almost 1 million hectares of exotic pine in Australia and only about 80,000 hectares of native hardwood.

The lack of government support for the hardwood plantation industry, choosing instead to subsidise the native forest industry, is the reason that hardwood plantations are considered "out of the race" economically. The only states with any significant native hardwood plantations are NSW and Tasmania. It is not known how much timber these plantations contribute to the industry, because the NSW Forestry Commission stopped collecting separate statistics for publicly owned hardwood plantations some

time ago. New Zealand, however, is now benefiting from a boom in hardwood exports from plantations established in the 1930s.

It has been suggested (Angel in *National Parks Journal*, Vol. 27) that the existing amounts of pine provide the basics for self-sufficiency already, and that if they were properly utilised, they could take pressure off our native forests now.

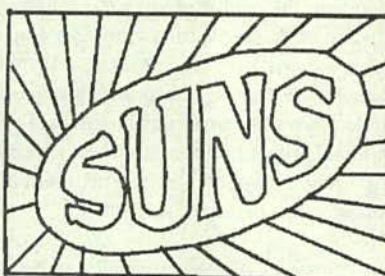
## Protecting jobs

Much emphasis has been placed by industry advocates on the importance of native forest logging to regional employment, but direct industry employment is often in the order of only 30%. This means that 70% of the work force are employed in ancillary industries or other commercial fields. Most "timber towns" have plantations in the immediate vicinity. Timber from these could be substituted with minimum disruption.

A 1993 Wilderness Society study, "Do Greens Cost Jobs?", found that 98% of job losses in the industry during 1971-89 were due to mechanisation, competition from plantations and the industry running out of forest due to over-logging. Only 2% of job losses were caused by forests being reserved.




Further, the job losses in native forests have been more than compensated for by increasing employment in growing and processing plantation timber. In Victoria, processing mature plantations will have provided around 4000 new jobs by the mid-1990s (RAC *Forest & Timber Inquiry*, 1991), and in the key timber region of south-east NSW, there are as many jobs due to come on stream from plantation logging as would be lost if logging in native forests was stopped altogether.

"The timber industry knows this", Sid Walker from the Nature Conservation Council told *Green Left Weekly*. "But they have made



Shop 1/25 Hyde St  
Bellingen (066) 552 266

## LET THE SUN WORK FOR YOU

-  Non Toxic BIO Wall Paints
-  Solar and Natural Building Products
-  Biocycle Waste Water System



it clear that they don't want one or the other (access to native forests or plantations), they want both".

If all logging in old growth forests were stopped immediately, an estimated 1000-2000 jobs would be affected. As Hamilton notes, "We should not fall for the argument that the industry is a good efficient source of employment...but as environmentalists we must also be concerned with social justice. That's why many environmentalists advocate the phasing out of logging rather than a sudden end.

"Unemployment is an ethical issue, just as saving the environment is. None of us have any desire to see working people deprived of their livelihood, and it is entirely reasonable to provide compensation and retraining packages for affected workers, just as the Commonwealth and Queensland governments did when they banned logging on Fraser Island."

A more immediate and comprehensive solution would be to stop the subsidies to the industry, requiring it to pay the true cost of road and management and the real value of the timber it gets from public lands. This, together with a ban on woodchipping of any environmentally valuable forest, would force the companies to move swiftly into their own plantations, many of which are coming on line for harvesting now. This would save both timber workers' jobs and old growth forests. It would save all of us the government subsidies now being given to timber corporations. The only losers would be those corporations, which would have to start getting along without handouts.

It is essential that the environment movement recognise that it will achieve the goal of an ecologically sustainable timber industry only with the support of the employees of the industry itself. This means campaigning to protect both the forests and timber workers' jobs and democratic rights.

It is equally essential that timber workers and their unions recognise that industry campaigns which focus on native forest woodchipping can only result in a downward spiral of job losses. It is the prospect of lost profits, not lost jobs, which is motivating the timber companies' funding of the blockade in Canberra. By forming the front lines of the companies' pro-woodchipping campaign, timber workers are acting in their own worst interests. They are being led down that path by a union leadership not noted for militancy over the past decade, during which thousands of jobs were sacrificed to industry restructuring while company profits soared.

The battle to stop woodchipping in our old growth forests is as much a battle to save jobs as it is to save the environment. The real choice is not jobs or the environment. It's both or neither.

*Source: Green Left Weekly, via World Rainforest Report.*

## NCEC WOODCHIP "VICTORY"

The North Coast Environment Council Inc (NCEC) has discontinued its Federal Court legal challenge of the 15 month woodchip export licence issued to Boral company Sawmillers Export P/L (SEP/L) in September 1994 by Federal Resource Minister David Beddall. The company "surrendered" the licence to the Minister on July 14, just before the scheduled full hearing of the NCEC's challenge to the legality of the licence before the Federal Court. Mr Terry Parkhouse, President of the NCEC, said "The Minister for Resources and the SEP/L company have effectively admitted that we were right when we first began this court challenge in October last year. In our view the export woodchipping carried on in the last 9 months, under this

now surrendered licence, has been shown to be illegal".

The outcome of the NCEC's action, and the successful challenge mounted by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc to the 1994 export woodchipping licence issued to the Gunns company in Tasmania, has moved the Federal Government to avoid further public scrutiny of the Resource Minister's decisions. Amendments to the Administrative Procedures of the Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974 have given the Resource Minister the discretion not to seek the advice of the Environment Minister or require an Environmental Impact Assessment. According to Mr Parkhouse "These amendments, announced under the guise of clarifying the confusion over the validity of all export licences following the Gunns case.....will give the Action Minister (usually the Resource Minister) the power to decide on the environmental impact of a proposal without referral to the expertise of the Department of Environment directly concerned with such assessment."

It appears that Mr Beddall can hardly wait to put his new powers into action. "The NCEC understands that Mr Beddall intends to issue a new 'legal challenge proof' licence to the Boral subsidiary (SEP/L), to ensure continued woodchipping and to prevent



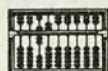
further court proceedings", Mr Parkhouse said. However the NCEC was not prepared to accept having their right to legally question the validity of export woodchipping licences legislated away from them. "This is clearly unacceptable. We have asked the Sydney Environmental Defenders Office to seek further legal advice. ....and we are considering a fresh legal challenge in our continuing campaign to end export woodchipping", he concluded.

If you would like to help the NCEC in their campaign, all donations are tax deductible and should be sent to The Treasurer, NCEC Inc, PO Box 400, Wauchope 2446.

*Source: Terry Parkhouse's Media Releases, 21/7/95 and 23/7/95.*

### Richard Laxton

B.Comm ACA (NZ)



Accounting services  
for all aspects  
of business.

- ❖ Chartered Accountant
- ❖ Business consultant
- ❖ Feasibility studies
- ❖ Information systems
- ❖ Business plans

PO Box 34, Bowraville. (065) 647-312



# THE GREEN PAGE

## News and Coming Events

*[Handwritten mark]*

### Salinity Forum

On the 1st and 2nd of March 120 people met at the Yanco Agricultural Institute near Leeton, for a Salt Action sponsored Salinity Forum.

Over the two days we heard several prominent people speak and split into smaller groups for presentations and workshops. Topics included Agroforestry - joint venturing, Land and Water Management Plans, utilizing saline soils, causes of dryland salinity, preventing channel seepage and regional Landcare development. A 'marketplace' was held during a long lunchtime on the first day so that various organisations could display and discuss information and equipment.

Some of the time was also spent discussing 'getting the message across' and the need to network. There was a general agreement that liaising with other groups and organisations was beneficial. A number of Landcare groups in the Griffith area are taking formal steps to set up a regional landcare network and hold a regional Landcare conference with delegates from each group. This initiative is supported by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Committee, and may show the way for similar schemes elsewhere.

Source: *Melanie Halliday, NSW Landcare Liaison Officer at the Australian Conservation Foundation, Landcare Newsletter.*

### Community Environment Monitoring

*Ben 3*  
*[Handwritten mark]*

Initiatives such as Watertablewatch, Saltwatch, and Streamwatch have been very successful and have demonstrated that communities and school children are interested in, and capable of, gathering important environmental data. However, until now, the opportunity for groups to share information and learn from one another has been limited.

As part of a new National Landcare Program project, staff at the ACF head office in Melbourne are collating a National Directory of Community Environmental Monitoring Initiatives. Questionnaires have been sent to people and groups across Australia, asking about their particular environmental monitoring program, methods, data handling and links to improved natural resource management. This information will be collated into the National Directory and recommendations will be made to the Federal Government on issues relating to community environment monitoring.

If you or your group did not receive a questionnaire and are involved in some form of environment monitoring (it does not have to be part of a program such as Streamwatch), you are welcome to contact Terry White or Sandra Haffenden at ACF in Melbourne (03) 4161166.

### Councillor Lyn Orrego to step down.

Councillor Lyn Orrego has announced she will not be seeking re-election to Nambucca Shire Council for the coming four year term. Instead she will concentrate on environment issues in the north coast region in her capacity as vice-president of the North Coast Environment Council.

Councillor Orrego said "Being on council has been a fantastic experience for me. I am pleased with my achievements especially in beginning to raise awareness of how important it is to look after our environment in everything we do." Thanking the many people in the community who gave her moral support for her stance in looking after the environment as the Nambucca's population increases, she added "I will still be active and outspoken on environment issues in our valley and I'm happy to offer assistance to anyone in the community who is seeking a better deal for the environment and our life support systems of air, water and soil".

Unfortunately representatives of the calibre of Lyn Orrego are rare in local

government (or any other government for that matter). Although we wish her well in her future endeavours her voice on the Nambucca Shire Council will be sadly missed.



### Kingfisher Centre Community Recycling Station.

Recycling has become part of the 90's way of life. Even Nambucca Shire Council recently introduced a curbside recycling service, which will commence operation in September.

The Kingfisher Centre, in the northern suburbs of Brisbane, was constructed in 1992, and is the world's most comprehensive school recycling station. It is part of Apsley Special School, a school for teenagers with moderate to severe intellectual and physical disabilities, and was inspired by the belief that, by doing something positive, the students could learn to cooperate, and become valued, happy contributing members of the community.

Apsley Special School students began recycling in 1983, raising \$25 for a whole year's work. Last year the 50 children with high support needs raised \$17 000; \$10 000 of this will go toward a therapy pool at the school. Between 1987 and 1995 the students processed 500 tonnes of recyclable cullet glass, 240 000 refillable bottles, 20 tonnes of aluminium, 4 800 wool bales of cardboard, 1.5 tonnes of hessian, 8 000 egg cartons, 18 tonnes of engine oil, and up to 2.4 tonnes of paper a week.

Harry Johnson, a teacher/recycling coordinator at the Kingfisher Centre, invites Environs readers passing through Brisbane to drop in, with or without recyclables, as they really appreciate visitors. The address is Lot 396, Dorville Road, Apsley Qld 4034.

Source: Letter from Harry Johnson

*03 9*



# NSW FOREST POLICY AFTERMATH

## Playing Politics

It should come as no surprise that the move to force forest management in NSW to continue in a more sustainable manner than has been allowed in the past has met with considerable opposition, not only from those with a vested interest in the industry, but also from those seeking to score a few cheap political points. Newspapers have been bombarded with press releases from conservative MPs seeking to muddy the waters and indulge in a bit of demagoguery, and editors have had mailbags brimming with letters that express their own political viewpoint in ways that would be too embarrassing to write themselves.

Opposition affords politicians the luxury of being able state their opinions loudly without the responsibility of having to act on them. For example, in an article about a timber shortage in Bowraville sawmills, the Member for Oxley, Mr Bruce Jeffrey was quoted in the Coffs Advocate of 23/5/95 as saying "I have pleaded with the minister to act swiftly to open compartments up for logging to ensure log supplies for sawmills desperate for work." It is touching to see that Mr Jeffrey has taken the plight of the Bowraville sawmills to heart. Unfortunately, his concern was not shared by his own minister while in government, who's policy saw the small, locally owned sawmills of Bowraville receiving no quota sawlogs from State Forests, yet 27,000 cubic metres of timber could be found for a multinational company at Kempsey.

Likewise Member for Coffs Harbour, Mr Andrew Fraser responded in the Coffs Advocate of 15/6/95 to "the halt to logging in the East Chaelundi Forest near Dorrigo during a nine month assessment of which areas are oldgrowth forest" with the claim that it "would particularly hurt Dorrigo's small timber mills. It's sure to cost jobs in Dorrigo, although I can't predict how many", Mr Fraser lamented. Mr Fraser's concerns were also ignored by his minister last year when the timber from Compartment 579, Wild Cattle Creek, went not to a small locally owned mill at Dorrigo, but to a multinational at South Grafton. Much of the timber from the Dorrigo area is also diverted from Dorrigo's small timber

mills to the treeless plain of Walcha for processing.

The outpourings of National Party MPs are restrained compared to some of the letters to the editor that have been printed (which makes you wonder about the ones that haven't made it to print). The Land of 20/7/95 even contained a picture of Bob Carr juxtaposed in front of a lone gum tree captioned "Carr's forests policy" in its letters page. For example a letter from the Chairman (sic) of the Upper Clarence Survival Committee, melodramatically proposed that "The Carr Government's plan to establish national parks in the Upper Clarence region is an economic and social disaster for the people of the Urbenville and Woodenbong districts.....Combined with the Federal Government's intention to preserve 15 per cent of Australia's native forests, the whole exercise is nothing else but pure political bastardry, treating people of country Australia as an expendable commodity, in an attempt to hold marginal State and Federal seats in the city.....Evidently ruining the assets of hard working Australians is all part of the Greens' political agenda".

Although extreme, the above letter is an example of the misinformation being disseminated on what have been welcome reforms to the timber industry in NSW. Unfortunately the paranoia and confusion that this misinformation campaign has produced has diverted attention from why the Carr Government was forced to introduce the reforms in the first place; unsustainable overcutting, the need for an adequate reserve system, and a greater recognition of environmental values in the community. The situation has prompted Friends Of The Earth to call on people to put positive and proactive responses in local papers and The Land in support of wilderness, oldgrowth and conservation generally, to balance the argument and hopefully clarify the situation.

You might like to point out that in the recent NSW elections the Greens were the only party with a policy of skewing timber supply agreements in favour of small, locally owned mills.



## The Rorting Begins.

### State Forests' Ambit Forest Conservation Strategy maps.

As part of the new forest strategy for NSW State Forests have produced Forest Conservation Strategy maps of the Northern, Central and South Regions. These seek to map the forest estate into seven categories based on harvesting history and management, using blocks of forest of approximately 200 hectares. The categories are Unlogged Forest, Light Selectively Logged Forest, Regrowth Forests (Merchantable) and Regrowth Forests (Pre Merchantable), Alternative Coupe Logging - Eden Management Area, Plantation Forests, Reserves and Preserves, and Community Forests.

However, as the following report from Dailan Pugh argues, the maps can best be described as an ambit claim rather than an accurate study of the conservation values of NSW's State Forests.

A preliminary assessment of State Forests' Forest Conservation Strategy maps has revealed numerous errors and inconsistencies. The maps are too inaccurate and misleading to form the basis for any conservation decision or to ensure that high



conservation value forests are not logged over the next nine months. It is apparent that there has been a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the status of many forests.

In summary, the State Forests' Forest Conservation Study maps:

- omit any consideration of western NSW, where there is the most urgent need for the protection of the fragments of forest which remain;

- exclude Vacant Crown Land, leasehold land and "profit a prendre" lands intended for logging by State Forests;

- misrepresent the distribution of large areas of "loggable" forests (ie productive forests on slopes less than 35 degrees) which are unlogged or light selectively logged;

- fail to attempt to identify areas of oldgrowth and lightly logged forest that are less than 200 ha in extent, and fail to identify numerous areas that are far in excess of 200 ha;

- fail to identify the distribution of most large areas of rainforest;

- fail to identify most reserve proposals where the ALP policy commits the Government to establish national parks by March 1996, with many parts of proposals apparently intended for logging and clearfelling over the next nine months;

- fail to identify reserves proposed in EISs (and associated reports) under preparation, with many proposed reserves apparently proposed for logging and clearfelling over the next nine months; and,

- fail to consider conservation values other than wilderness and unlogged forest. The maps purport to show 'environmental units' which require all their extent on public lands to be reserved to meet the national criteria of 15% reservation, though it is evident that the majority of such areas are not shown.

It is evident that the districts which prepared the relevant parts of the maps have not been consistent in their application of the criteria and that in some areas there has been a deliberate mis-classification of forests to allow them to be logged. It is unacceptable to misrepresent mapped attributes to meet some preconceived management intent.

To enable informed decisions to be made over the next nine months there is a need for mapping of the attributes which these maps purport to show. As these maps blatantly

misrepresent the status of many forests they are not acceptable for their intended purpose.

It is essential that an independent review (including NPWS, DUAP and conservation groups) be undertaken to rectify the most blatant errors, identify areas for further assessment and to delineate forests with the lowest conservation values to maintain supply to industry until the interim assessment is complete.

The NSW government has accepted the maps and it will be up to conservation groups to challenge the validity of the classification of compartments as they appear on the order of works. The road to forest reform is not a smooth one.

### *State Forests' Claim to have destroyed everything of environmental value in the Nambucca is premature.*

In effect the Forest Conservation Strategy maps referred to in the previous article show that State Forests in the Nambucca valley are comprised mainly of merchantable and pre-merchantable regrowth, with a few plantations toward the coast. In other words, proposals to reserve compartments from logging, even on an interim basis, are invalid because everything of environmental value within the public forests has been destroyed. Fortunately, this is not an accurate assessment. Yet.

State Forests mapping of the Nambucca valley in this manner is possible because the maps only identify 200 hectare-sized areas of oldgrowth which happen to align with compartment boundaries. It is therefore possible to "gerrymander" those troublesome stands of oldgrowth that remain out of existence (those that haven't already been logged out of existence that is). For example Mistake State Forest, is shown as being merchantable regrowth, when in fact there

are substantial oldgrowth stands remaining. According to the Forestry Commission's Environmental Impact Statement, 1987, 2,400 hectares of old growth remain in Mistake State Forest. However, the methodology used by the Forestry Commission was such that their map is likely to be an underestimate of the old growth remaining. Aerial photo interpretation by a Forestry Foreman was used as its basis. A detailed map of the growth stages within Mistake State Forest, which is part of the Dunggir Conservation Proposal shows that far more than the 2,400 hectares as estimated by the Forestry Commission, is likely to be oldgrowth Forest.

The NSW Government's policy of halting the logging of oldgrowth forest is compromised by the Forest Conservation Strategy maps. Even if a smaller qualifying area for patches of oldgrowth, say 25 hectares which has been rumoured, is adopted, there is still no protection for smaller areas. Considering the devastation that the public forests in the Nambucca valley have been subjected to, the remaining stands of oldgrowth forest are arguably more valuable than ever before, and their protection even more important.

That is just the oldgrowth that the Forest Conservation Strategy maps have omitted. They also fail to consider the high conservation values of endangered species and rare forest types as is required by the Commonwealth's Deferred Forest Areas Criteria. By trying to avoid taking these criteria into account the government is prolonging the conflict and holding up the process and progress of settling the forest issue. It is clearly scientifically valid to protect these values if a Comprehensive Adequate and Representative Reserve (CARR) system is to be achieved.

What is needed is a change of ethos in forest management in NSW from the top down. As long as environmental values remain a nuisance, to be mapped out of existence or ignored where possible, conflict between State Forests and the conservation movement will be inevitable.





This month's cover... Spotted-tailed or Tiger Quoll (*Dasyurus maculatus*)

Several years ago I was staying at Point Lookout in the New England National Park with some artist friends, when the peacefulness of the evening was shattered by the sound of the metal garbage bin being knocked over. Someone grabbed a torch and we all headed for the door, thoughts of an intruder in our minds! When the light fell on the bin - there was our 'intruder', desperately trying to dislodge the lid, which was locked on, so he could get to the chicken bones he could smell... leftovers from our dinner!

It was a Tiger Quoll - the first one any of us had ever seen. Those with flashes on their cameras took photos - the quoll wasn't worried - he just wanted to get at those leftovers! Finally we had to put a heavy rock on the bin so he couldn't move it, or no one would have had any sleep.

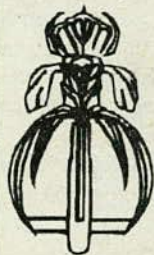
Tiger Quolls can be distinguished from the smaller Eastern Quoll - still common in Tasmania, but possibly extinct on the mainland - by its spotted tail, almost the same length as its body. It is our largest mainland marsupial carnivore - the Tasmanian Devil is larger. Quolls suffer from direct competition with foxes & feral cats.

Uncommon over most of its range, if the last forest areas in which it is found are opened up by logging it too will be at risk of extinction. Another good reason to conserve all remaining old growth forests!

Julie.

## Leslie McInnes

Herbalist Homoeopath

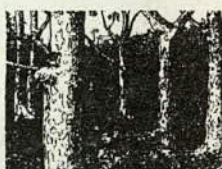


48 Jellico St  
Macksville  
NSW 2447

Phone:-  
(065) 681667

## ROSE GUM TIMBERS PTY LTD

AUSTRALIAN HARDWOODS  
FOR FURNITURE & JOINERY



ROGER BURKE (066) 55 2100  
MARTIN HOGAN (015) 78 5909

# Environs

the north coast  
environment news  
magazine

Environs is published every other month on a voluntary basis to bring together reports from a large number of environmental organisations. Many groups are affiliated with Environs, including the Bellingen Environment Centre, and the Nambucca Valley Conservation Association.

Editorial contributions are welcomed. They should include the authors name and phone number and should be sent by mail to: Environs, PO Box 123, Bowraville 2449, or by fax to: (065) 647 808, or by email to: peg@environs. Subscriptions are \$12 for 6 issues. Advertisements may be lodged with Julie Mozsny by phoning (065) 695 360. Editorial and layout for Environs is by Tom and Sue Goodwin. Cover artwork is by Julie Mozsny.

PRINTED BY DALE PRINT  
MACKSVILLE-682-296



# Environs

if undelivered return to:  
PO Box 123, Bowraville 2449

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

**POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA**

P  
Nimbin News  
PO Box 209  
NIMBIN NSW 2480

Print Post Approved PP 228048/0001