

**COMPARISON OF FORESTRY COMMISSION STATE FORESTS AND  
FLORA RESERVES WITH NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE RESERVES  
WITH REGARD TO THE PROTECTION OF NATURAL VALUES**

A third written submission by Total Environment Centre to the Review of Management Policies for the Border Ranges conducted by the State Pollution Control Commission

The Forestry Commission puts the view very strongly that its multiple-use management policy provides virtually all of the more obvious benefits claimed for National Park Management ... " (1)

"All in all a Flora Reserve has similar safeguards for preservation of natural areas as those administered by the National Parks and Wildlife Service." (2)

These claims in the Forestry Commission's submission were reiterated in verbal submissions to the Inquiry by Forestry spokesmen. The claims are strongly opposed by all the conservation organisations represented at the Inquiry. Particular exception to the claims is taken by Total Environment Centre. We trust the following examination of the respective legislation, administration and records of the N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service and the N.S.W. Forestry Commission will assist this Inquiry.

Evidence has been given by a wide range of experts as to the high order of natural values of the Border Ranges (cf Dr. Newman, Dr. Bell, Dr. Mason, Dr. Schaefer, N.P. & W.S., Dr. S. Clark, etc.).

Gazettal of the area by the Australian Heritage Commission is the result of a parallel assessment of the importance of the natural values of the area.

**NSW Legislation**

NSW legislation specifically places natural values of such a high order under the care of the N.P. & W.S. as its paramount concern.

See N.P. & W. Act No. 80 1974  
section 8 (2)

" (a) the areas to be reserved as national parks are spacious areas containing unique or outstanding scenery or natural phenomena ..."

" (c) the areas to be dedicated as nature reserves are areas of special scientific interest containing wildlife or natural environments or natural phenomena ..."

Also Section 49 (3)

"Lands within a nature reserve shall be deemed to be dedicated for the purposes of -

(a) the care, propagation, preservation and conservation of wildlife.

- (1) page 7, Forestry Commission Submission
- (2) page 6, Forestry Commission Submission

- (b) the care, preservation and conservation of natural environments and natural phenomena.
- (c) the promotion of the appreciation and enjoyment of wildlife, natural environments and natural phenomena.

On the other hand protection of natural values is only a subsidiary or secondary concern of the Forestry Commission under its Act.

See Forestry Act No. 55, 1916  
Section 8A (1)

"The objects of the Commission shall be" (my emphasis)  
"(a) to conserve and utilise the timber on Crown-timber lands to the best advantage of the State."

"(b) to provide adequate supplies of timber from Crown-timber lands for building, commercial industrial, agricultural, mining and domestic purposes,

"(c) to preserve and improve in accordance with good forestry practice, the soil resources and water catchment capabilities of Crown-timber lands;

"(d) to encourage the use of timber derived from trees grown in the State; and

"(e) consistent with the use of State forests for the purposes of forestry and of flora reserves for the preservation of the native flora thereon -

(i) to promote and encourage their use as a recreation; and

(ii) to conserve birds and animals thereon."

"(2) In the attainment of its objects and the exercise and performance of its powers, authorities, duties and functions under this Act, the Commission shall take all practicable steps that it considers necessary or desirable to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the quality of the environment."

The confliction of purposes built into these objects should be obvious. The over-riding aim is to provide timber.

The same generally exploitative direction of the Act is confirmed in Section 11 (1) (a) to (m).

As noted above for an area to be reserved under the N.P. & W. Act as a National Park it is required to be "a spacious area containing unique or outstanding scenery or natural phenomena" (Section 8 (2)).

For an area to be State Forest it is required to be only Crown land. In addition the Commission shall

"endeavour to ensure to such intent as to the commission seems proper that the selection of lands to be so dedicated

will result in -

- (a) the promotion of effective and economic control, utilisation and management of the forests for timber production and the facilitation of the economic marketing of the timber and other products of the forests;
- (b) the establishment, maintenance or expansion of industry for the processing and treatment of the timber and other products of the forests;
- (c) the growth and harvesting of trees for timber and products of economic value; and
- (d) the continuing protection of necessary tree cover in the public interest.

and shall take into account -

- (e) the potentiality for economic timber production of any lands which are of an inferior character for the purposes of agriculture or grazing but which, by appropriate treatment of the soils, would be capable of sustaining the growth of suitable commercial species of trees in plantations; and
- (f) such other factors as the commission considers relevant to the establishment and proper management of State forests."

#### Nature Reserves and Flora Reserves

A Nature Reserve under the N.P. & W. Act is "an area of special scientific interest containing wildlife or natural environments or natural phenomena." Lands within a nature reserve are dedicated for the purposes of (Section 49 (3) ):-

- "(a) the care, propagation, preservation and conservation of wildlife;
- (b) the care, preservation and conservation of natural environments and natural phenomena;
- (c) the study of wildlife, natural environments and natural phenomena; and
- (d) the promotion of the appreciation and enjoyment of wildlife, natural environments and natural phenomena."

A Flora Reserve under the Forestry Act is Crown-timber land usually part or the whole of a State Forest.

The object of a flora reserve is only nominated under the requirement for a 'scheme of operations' (Section 25A (5) (b) ). The object of such a scheme shall be "the preservation of native flora on the flora reserve." No other purposes are spelled out.

#### Management Plans

Both Nature Reserves under the N.P. & W. Act and Flora Reserves under the Forestry Act are required to have a management plan

(in the case of Flora Reserves the document is called a 'scheme of operations' or a 'working plan').

National Parks, Nature Reserves and State Forests and Flora Reserves can only be revoked by State Parliament.

A Management Plan by the N.P. & W.S. must be produced in draft form, advertised, publicly exhibited, objections and comments received and amended where thought appropriate by the Director. It requires Ministerial approval before it becomes operative. Any substantial alterations proposed are subject to the same public procedures.

A 'scheme of operations' or working plan for a Flora Reserve need not be publicly exhibited. It is made available to the public not as the public's right but at the discretion of the Commission.

Similarly Management Plans for State Forests are made available at the discretion of the Commission. Until about 12 months ago the only State Forest Management Plan available was the Eden area plan. Now completed Management Plans are available for viewing at the N.S.W. Environment Centre. There are many incomplete Management Plans which are not available.

Both N.P. & W.S. and the Forestry Commission have been slow in producing plans for many of the areas administered (no doubt for good reasons of staff shortage etc.)

Copies of State Forest Management Plans are not readily obtained from the Forestry Commission which charges a high rate (25 cents per page) for photocopying. On the other hand N.P. & W.S. Management Plans can be obtained across the counter at a reasonable charge and have been so ever since the first plan was produced.

However where operations of such drastic effect as logging are taking place there is little excuse for the failure to provide a copy of a management plan on request. There is no Management Plan available for Coffs Harbour Forestry District despite the fact that it involves destruction of 30,000 of the total 60,000 hectares of rainforest remnants in the district.

The objectives for a plan of management are spelled out in much greater detail in the N.P. & W. Act (Part V) than in the Forestry Act (Section 25A).

The Director of N.P. & W.S. may with the concurrence of the Forestry Commission prepare a plan of Management for a State Forest. (N.P. & W. Act Section 73) This provision can only arise from a clear understanding by the legislators that N.P. & W.S. is the nature conservation authority.

#### Wildlife Legislation and administration

Wildlife is a primary concern of the N.P. & W.S. under its Act, particularly in Nature Reserves

See N.P. & W. Act sections (previously quoted)  
Section 8 (2) (c)  
Section 49 (3) (a) (b) (c)  
Section 72 (4) (a)

Wildlife is only a minor concern of the Forestry Commission, conflicting with its main exploitative purposes. Only one minor sub, sub section (8A (1) (e) (ii) ) gives the object

of conserving birds and animals but only so far as it is "consistent with the use of State Forests for the purposes of forestry and of flora reserves for the preservation of the native flora thereon."

N.P. & W.S. employs thirteen officers full time on wildlife research, Forestry only one (and that one is seconded from N.P. & W.S.) and it employs another thirteen ranger naturalists. In addition the average N.P. & W. officer spends a considerable amount of time on wildlife management while few Forestry officers would do so.

N.P. & W.S. employs an Assistant Director (Wildlife). The Forestry Commission places no such emphasis in its top management.

#### Advisory Committees

There is a National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council to advise the Minister on most areas of concern under the Act, including "the preservation and protection of wildlife" (Sections 23 - 26 incl. and Schedule 7).

In addition each National Park and Nature Reserve or in some cases a group of National Park(s) and Nature Reserves has its local Advisory Committee (Sections 24 - 26 incl. and Schedule 8).

Members of these committees are appointed by the Minister.

There is no Advisory Committee to the Commissioner for Forests. Nor is there ~~provision~~ provision for appointment of Advisory Committees to each ~~State Forest~~ State Forest or group of Forests.

However the working plan of a Flora Reserve under the Forestry Act may contain provisions authorising the council of a local municipality or shire or representative(s) of any local committee or public body or organisation to participate to the extent specified in the working plan in management of the Reserve Section 25A (5) (f) (g).

#### Systems of Reserves

The National Parks and Wildlife Act provides for a system of reserves to cater for a range of scientific, cultural and recreational interests. Thus there are National Parks, Historic Sites, Aboriginal areas, Protected archaeological areas, wilderness areas, wildlife districts, wildlife refuges and game reserves.

The Forestry Act provides only for Timber Reserves, State Forests and Flora Reserves.

A Forestry Flora Preserve has no status in legislation. It is merely an administrative title used by the Forestry Commission, able to be revoked by it at will. Other similar terms are used by the Forestry Commission. In some cases the term Flora Preserve may indicate an area in process of dedication or setting apart as a Flora Reserve.

#### Security of Reserves

As noted previously National Parks, Nature Reserves and Forestry Flora Reserves can only be revoked by Parliament.

However Flora Reserves are Crown-timber land and usually occupy part of a State Forest in which logging may be expected from time to time.

It is theoretically possible that a Flora Reserve Management Plan could prescribe logging over the whole area and while, until this Inquiry, no one expected 'overall logging on a Flora Reserve' a smaller incursion was not beyond possibility. Therefore Flora Reserves have been seen as less secure tenure than National Parks or Nature Reserves.

The proposal by the N.S.W. Forestry Commission at this Inquiry to revoke and log Grady's Creek Flora Reserve, the largest Flora Reserve in the state, has created a precedent which throws the whole Flora Reserve system into doubt.

It is one thing for an aggressive authority to take an area of land from another authority (as Forestry took 85,000 acres of Kosciusko National Park from the young N.P. & W.S. some years ago). It is another thing for the authority itself to advocate the destruction of an area entrusted to it by Parliament for the preservation of Flora.

### Conclusions

This review shows the various aspects of nature conservation to be paramount in the considerations of the National Parks and Wildlife Act but subordinate in the Forestry Act to its prime purpose of producing timber for industry.

The N.P. & W. Act dwells at much greater length and in much greater detail on the requirements for nature conservation placed upon the Director, N.P.W.S. than does the Forestry Act upon the Commissioner for Forests.

The N.P. & W. Act provides for a system of Reserves to cater for a range of cultural recreational and scientific interests. The Forestry Act provides only for State Forests and Flora Reserves. Skilled administrators for nature conservation are employed by N.P. & W.S. but not by Forestry.

The provision for public participation in planning and administering National Parks and Nature Reserves, etc. is much more integral and extensive than the limited provision under the Forestry Act for a local Advisory Committee to a Flora Reserve.

Finally the confidence of the community cannot reside in the Forestry Commission for the preservation of scientifically valuable areas when the Commission itself proposes the logging of the largest Flora Reserve under its control.

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Milo Dunphy  
Director  
Total Environment Centre  
18 Argyle Street  
SYDNEY 2000.

20th April. 1978.

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## SUMMARY

The sawmilling industry, acting on the advice of the State Government, harvested the Terania Creek basin on three previous occasions, just as it has been harvesting countless other similar, if not identical, areas throughout the State.

It has recently attempted to harvest the hardwood forests of Terania Creek – again with State Government approval – but has been prevented from carrying out its task of supplying timber to the community by a group of violent protesters who have used every means possible to provoke retaliatory violence.

The timber from Terania Creek will be removed under the environmental protection guidelines laid down by the Government – a condition of the Government's approval for the harvesting.

Attempts at achieving compromise with the protesters have failed.

Since the State Cabinet decision, none of the advice

provided to the Government has changed. The only change has been the introduction of the protests.

Should the Government back down on this issue, further such demonstrations may be anticipated. It is a fact that protesters threatened such action throughout the State during the demonstrations.

In addition, the introduction of an Environmental Impact Study system will bankrupt the industry and will certainly destroy the Government's economic stability.

The sawmilling industry has a future as long as mankind in the area – carrying out its traditional role of supplying timber to people.

We ask only that the industry – and the workers in it – be permitted to return to their peaceful existence of carrying out that function, without interference or fear of Government reversals of decisions.

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## ASSOCIATED COUNTRY SAWMILLERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

ADC KENT, 189 KENT STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000. TELEPHONE (02) 27 9256

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9 DEC 1974

Total Environment Centre,  
18 Argyle Street,  
SYDNEY. 2000. Phone 27 4714

December 4, 1974.

Nature Conservation Council of NSW,  
NSW Environment Centre,  
263b The Broadway,  
BROADWAY. 2007.

INVITATION TO URGENT MEETING REGARDING  
WOODCHIP PROPOSALS FOR NORTHERN N.S.W.

Your organisation is invited to send two representatives to a meeting of representatives of approximately 33 conservation organisations on Sunday, 15th December 1974.

The meeting will be held at Coff's Harbour. Advice of the precise meeting place will be forwarded in the next few days.

A decision to call the Coff's Harbour gathering was made at a meeting at the NSW Environment Centre called by Mr. Len Willan, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Centre and Chairman of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. It was unanimously resolved on the motion of Peter Maslen, seconded by Alan Catford: "That a meeting be called on 15th December in Coff's Harbour to seek co-operation with North Coast conservation groups on the urgent threat of the North Coast woodchip proposals".

It is hoped that the Coff's Harbour meeting might begin by pooling information regarding the woodchip proposals of the three Japanese companies and two Australian companies known to be involved. The meeting might then move on to discuss a common policy towards the proposals and a concerted plan of campaign.

The urgency and importance of this meeting cannot be too highly stressed. Information from Departmental sources and companies involved lead the writers to believe the promoters expect approval of their projects by the end of February.

We are highly critical of the timing of these applications and inquiries in the Christmas period when many conservation groups and Parliament are in recess.

The proposals, based on Coff's Harbour, Iluka and Pinkenbah, involve forested areas within 150 miles radius of each of those centres. Exports of the order of a million tons of woodchip per year are proposed initially.

Government reports such as the Development Report on the Richmond-Tweed Region already state that "the forest areas are now being overcut". The chip milling proposals go beyond overcutting - they threaten to destroy the forests of the North Coast and Northern Tablelands of NSW in the short term.

The invitation to meet at Coff's Harbour has been extended to 26 conservation groups on the North Coast and to 7 State or National groups. The seven groups are :

Venue: Masonic Hall  
Gordon St, Coff's Harbour

Time: 9am 15 Dec 74

*Mr. Peter P. Scott  
Director of Chairman  
in Coff's  
on woodchip  
approved*

*Monitors  
chipmilling which the  
enquiry is in. 10/12/74*

*to rep. NCC. =  
Murray Scott  
Mark Vandepol*



1359



# ASSOCIATED COUNTRY SAWMILLERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Telephone: 02-27.9256 Telex: 25036 Telegrams: "AscOSawmil," Sydney.

A.D.C. KENT, 189 KENT STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000

## TERANIA CREEK

1. The day-to-day pressure of handling the flood of activities associated with our efforts to get the NSW Government to stand by its repeated earlier decisions to log the hardwood (not the rainforest) at Terania Creek caused one other serious problem.
2. That was our sheer inability to keep our friends, both in the timber industry and outside it, informed of what was happening and to keep them briefed with the facts on the Terania Creek issue.
3. The attached "Fact Sheet" is our first major step to do something about it and, from now on, we hope to be able to keep you right in the picture.

### THE DECISION

4. After weeks of delay, confusion and uncertainty, the Wran Government has decided to suspend logging at Terania Creek while an independent inquiry is carried out. In the meantime, alternative log supplies are to be provided by the Forestry Commission for the mills involved.

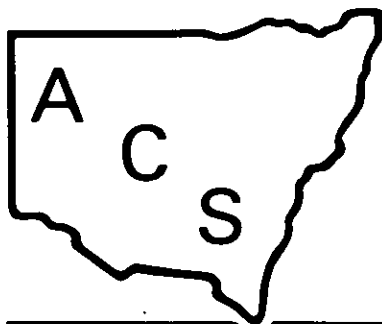
### AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

5. The decision has given the green light to the radical environmental lobby to take similar protest action on some 70 to 80 identical north coast areas that would, on any given day, be being logged.
6. No new scientific evidence or professional advice has come forward that in any way supports the Government's action in reversing its original decision.
7. The Government simply backed down to a small group of violent protesters - many of them with no stake whatsoever in the real issues at Terania Creek. In doing so, the Government has paved the way for Government by demonstration.
8. What all this means is that the future of employment and investment in the sawmilling industry in NSW is very much at risk. It does not, of course, stop there but will spill over to all development involving resources.

### OUR FUTURE ACTION

9. Sawmillers have no intention of sitting still while the existence of their industry is threatened. We are now involved in planning action to combat this threat. We have given priority to keeping you informed about developments as they occur.

  
KEITH JORDAN  
MANAGER



# TERANIA CREEK - THE FACTS

## THE FORESTS OF TERANIA CREEK

The forests of Terania Creek basin form part of the Whian Whian State Forest. In fact about 14% of the State Forest is located in the Terania Creek basin.

The 690 hectares of forest in the basin include 390 hectares which have been harvested previously.

The planned harvesting operation will affect less than a quarter of the total forest area in the basin — some 160 hectares.

## THE HARVESTING OF TERANIA CREEK

The harvesting operation will be restricted to the hardwood forests of Terania Creek — and not the rainforest area in the basin.

It is, in fact, almost identical to some 70 or so other operations currently being undertaken by the forest industries on the North Coast of New South Wales.

The sawmilling industry has given up its rights to harvest the rain forest area of Terania Creek. This was a compromise move by the forest industries to achieve agreement with the Terania Native Forest Action Group. Unfortunately, this offer was spurned by the Group.

Throughout harvesting operations, environmental protection regulations laid down by the State Government are strictly observed. These regulations require special measures to be undertaken by the sawmilling industry to protect streams from siltation, to ensure minimum damage to the trees surrounding the tree selected for harvesting, and to protect the aesthetic attraction of the forest as far as possible.

Professional foresters mark the trees to be harvested and the path along which the tree should be felled. Trees are marked in a manner aimed at assisting the regeneration of the trees in the area which has been harvested.

Trees are removed from the Terania Creek forests and surrounding forest areas on what is known as sustained yield — i.e. a yield which can be sustained forever. Thus, if a hardwood tree takes 80 years to grow, every second tree could be removed each 40 years without causing severe disruption to the forest. In fact less than half the trees are removed in a selective harvesting operation, thus protecting the ecology of the forest area.

## THE TERANIA CREEK BASIN

The Terania Creek basin does not contain "the best piece of lowland sub-tropical rainforest anywhere near Lismore". Scientists agree that there is no basis for such a claim, made by protesters.

In addition, the Big Scrub, which once covered the Lismore area, has its last remnant preserved in the Big Scrub Flora Reserve. In fact this Flora Reserve is the best piece of lowland sub-tropical rainforest anywhere near Lismore and it has been permanently reserved from harvesting activities along with a large area of forest immediately adjoining the formally declared Flora Reserve.

## EMPLOYMENT AND TERANIA CREEK

The sawmilling industry is the largest single employer group on the Far North Coast. And investment by sawmillers in the employment of people has reached major proportions.

On average, some \$50,000 is invested in each person employed in the sawmilling industry.

In addition, more than 100 people are employed in the sawmilling complex of Standard Sawmilling Co. at Murwillumbah. They receive approximately \$1 million a year in wages. The multiplier factor applied to the industry is 2.2 (i.e. for every job in the industry there are 2.2 jobs outside the industry). Thus, there are some 220 people directly reliant on the industry for their future. That's about 220 families which would be forced to leave the North Coast area if the company was forced to close.

Reductions in population will always mean reductions in other services and facilities such as shops, schools, council services, clubs, hotels, sporting and community organisations etc.

## TERANIA CREEK AND TOURISM

The Terania Creek basin is open to tourists at any time — provided the residents of the Terania Creek area permit them to enter the forest.

Prior to the current harvesting operation, access to the forest was limited as the road stopped at the forest boundary. Visitors were deterred from entering the forest by a gate across the public road at the approximate boundary of a property currently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson. It appeared that the area on the other side of the gate was private property. This, however, was incorrect.

With the re-opening of the road into the forest, far greater access has been provided to tourists and other visitors to enjoy the rainforest and the hardwood forest.

The Associated Country Sawmillers has suggested that it would be prepared to co-operate with any other group in encouraging the Government, through the Forestry Commission, to develop picnicking or other facilities for the community. This suggestion was classed a "public relations exercise" by the Terania Native Forest Action Group.

## TIMBER FROM THE FORESTS

The timber from the forests at Terania Creek are harvested in a manner which will guarantee a supply of timber forever for the people of New South Wales.

In particular, much of the timber from Terania Creek will find its way back to Lismore again. Some \$600,000 worth of sawn timber is supplied to the Lismore area each year by Standard Sawmilling Co. for use in housing construction, home extensions, etc. No doubt many of the houses along Terania Creek Road were constructed from timber supplied by Standard Sawmilling Co.

The sawlogs to come from Terania Creek represent about half the annual quota of Standard Sawmilling Co. Without those sawlogs, the mill would face possible closure.

The alternative to closure of the mill would be the revision of the forests harvesting programme. However, this would result in the overcutting of the forests in the area — i.e. cutting them at a rate beyond a sustained yield. This flies directly in the face of the State Government's policy of achieving a sustained yield from the forests of New South Wales.

New South Wales is unable to supply almost half its tim-

ber needs — the loss of the hardwood timber resource in Terania Creek would be detrimental to the building and construction industry as well as to the people wishing to build homes.

### **"ROADING" THE FOREST**

It is true that some 800 metres of "road" has been created in the virgin rainforest area. This is an extension of the existing 3½ kilometres of road through the previously-harvested rainforest area in the basin.

Since the previous harvesting of the rainforest, in the late 1960's new techniques for roading through rainforest have been developed. As is used with all rainforest activity, the intention is to reduce to a minimum the infestation of weeds or scrub, which slows down the growth rate of young seedlings.

Thus, it is the intention of the harvesting operation to maintain a canopy over the road, thus preventing major weed infestation.

As sawmillers, it is pointless for us to grow weeds, which only appear to slow down the regeneration of new trees in the area. It is the trees which we wish to regenerate — just as it is the wish of the community as a whole.

### **INVESTIGATIONS**

The Government made its decision to proceed with harvesting the Terania Creek basin in the full knowledge that it was recommended by scientifically-orientated professional foresters; that the State Pollution Control Commission has stated that there was insufficient reason for an environmental impact study to be prepared; that the Ombudsman's office, in a report prepared early in 1979, stated that there was every reason for the Forestry Commission to proceed with the harvesting of Terania Creek.

Foresters have studied the area in detail, using the knowledge they have accumulated over many decades to develop plans for the careful management of the forest so that it can provide timber for the community as well as recreational potential for the entire community.

### **EFFECTS OF FOREST HARVESTING**

Some people have claimed that the forest in Terania Creek will be irreversibly destroyed by harvesting the forest, that logs will roll down the slopes into the creek, bringing other trees crashing down with them. Others have claimed that by harvesting the forest, it will be opened to weeds, fires and heat.

The facts of the matter are that the forests at Terania Creek, like hundreds of other areas, have been harvested on several occasions — **WITHOUT DAMAGE TO THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Obviously, it would be senseless for any industry to charge about, willy-nilly carving up its raw material without care for what it is doing. Yet this is the picture some people attempt to present of the forest industries.

Sawmillers are most concerned that the forests of New South Wales are harvested to maintain the environment so that new trees can grow up to replace those harvested. And natural regeneration is by far the least expensive way of achieving this. So the forest are harvested to assist the regeneration process.

In a scientific report, Alex Floyd, a research forester from the Forestry Commission who is currently attached to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, stated that there was an interesting association of bangalow palms in the valley. He went on to state: "the palms have tendered to expand to fill in the gaps created by past logging. In due course, the larger forest species should emerge through these palms to form a new canopy".

Floyd also considered the cause of a large number of trees which were found rotting on the ground, resembling a very

heavily logged area. He says: "... a ground inspection reveals no evidence of cutting as is found downstream ... One could postulate a blowdown from a particularly violent storm, a very fierce wildfire which burnt through the rainforest or perhaps excessive waterlogging during a very wet period. It is quite likely that an intensive research effort could provide the answer; but at present time I am unable to evaluate its significance ... Because of the unknown causes of origin of the "natural" palm forest, any disturbance upslope may be risky and may perhaps jeopardise its future".

This scientific report has been quoted out of context by protesters at Terania Creek. In fact there has been no disturbance of the palm forest, and the risks which Floyd considers are as significant as the risks of an individual being killed in the street.

Finally, Floyd sums up his report by stating: "Although there are some fine individual specimens of trees (red cedar, white beech and red ash), there do not appear to be any unusual or rare species not already preserved elsewhere in these forests".

He returns again to the palm forest when, as a scientist, he presents his viewpoint that "the extensive apparently natural palm forests at the head of the creek could be of ecological interest as they must surely be of the greatest area of this type in New South Wales. Further comment on their significance is impossible without factual information on how they were formed and whether they represent a passing phase or a stable community".

Thus, claims by the Terania Native Forest Action Group can be placed into the perspective of a scientific forester's report to other scientists on his theories.

It must be stressed, at this point, that the palm forests are **NOT** to be harvested by sawmillers.

It must also be clear from the above statements that the **ONLY** unusual feature of Terania Creek basin is the size of a palm forest which appears to have been created by natural harvesting of the forest in years gone by.

### **AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY**

The principles involved in the development of an Environmental Impact Study are so vast that it would close the sawmilling industry down almost overnight.

The facts are that an Environmental Impact Study normally costs between \$10,000 and \$50,000 depending on the detail required.

Based on previous claims for an environmental impact study on forest areas (requiring noise readings to be taken on the level of noise to reach local residents from the middle of a forest which had never been harvested and for which there was no access), the cost could reasonably be placed at approximately \$20,000.

It is a fact that approximately 100 harvesting areas are opened up each month (many of them like Terania Creek — are being used for the second, third or fourth time). If an Environmental Impact Study is carried out on each of these areas, the cost to the State would be approximately \$2 million a month. In addition, there would be vast periods of time needed for all the studies to be placed on public display, to receive comments, to analyse the comments, and then to make recommendations to the Government.

Imagine the confusion if 100 recommendations on forest areas alone were put before the Government each month!

In addition, it means that professional foresters would no longer be trusted with the management of our forests. As an analogy, it would be similar to permitting the community to comment on every scientific study or every scientific project undertaken in the State.

Finally, the costs of such studies would reach such astronomical proportions that the community could not bear it. The

Government would be forced to increase the cost of timber to the sawmiller who would be forced to pass it on to the consumer — the building industry. The enormous effects of this would take decades to recover from.

In addition, the spokesmen for the Terania Native Forest Action Group and others involved in the demonstrations and protests have constantly stated to the Government, foresters and sawmilling industry that they will only accept an environmental impact study if it is carried out in accordance with their rules, by a person of whom they approve and that it comes to the conclusions of which they approve.

### ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES

The State Government, through the Catchment Areas Protection Board, Soil Conservation Service, the State Pollution Control Commission, the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission and various other instrumentalities, has laid down strict guidelines on forest harvesting to ensure maximum protection of the environment.

These guidelines may be obtained from the Associated Country Sawmillers of N.S.W., 189 Kent Street, Sydney, the Forestry Commission of New South Wales or the Catchment Areas Protection Board.

Combining these guidelines with the accumulated experience of foresters results in forest management of a standard which is close to the best in Australia, if not the world.

Research projects are constantly being carried out by forest services and industry throughout the State and interstate to learn more about the forest itself and to devise better ways of harvesting the forest, based on that knowledge.

### ORIGINS OF THE PROTEST

The protest over the harvesting of Terania Creek basin began suddenly in February 1975 when local residents first informed the forester at Murwillumbah that they had been informed that all eucalypts and Brush Box in the basin were to be clear felled and that 50% of the rainforest was to be removed.

The matter escalated from there, with the local residents refusing to accept the explanations of foresters or sawmillers about the proposed harvesting activities which did not include clear felling of the hardwood stands.

Explanations that previous harvesting operations had successfully assisted regeneration of the forest and that modern harvesting techniques had improved environmental protection considerably, met with blatant scepticism or sheer abuse.

When the protests developed in Terania Creek Basin itself, there was an influx of "visitors" from interstate and even overseas. Several groups of demonstrators were overheard discussing the difficulties they had faced in making travel arrangements to get from one demonstration to another.

Police also identified members of the Ananda Marg religious sect among the protesters.

In effect the protest was taken over by many groups from areas other than Terania Creek.

### THE DEMONSTRATIONS

The protests have been of the very worst kind, with protesters using the benefits of the laws recently passed by the State Government to provoke sawmilling employees, foresters and police.

Acts which can only be classed as indecent have been carried out in the forest by the protesters, and every attempt has been made by the protesters to encourage workers in the bush to retaliate against them. These acts have been usually carried out at a personal level.

In addition, sabotage of sawmilling equipment and sawlogs lying in the forest has been used by the protesters.

A sawmill at Lismore was burned to the ground in the early hours of the morning after the sawmill had publicly

advertised that it was collecting petitions in favour of harvesting at Terania Creek. The office of the sawmill had allegedly been broken into prior to the blaze, according to police. Normally, the petitions would have been held in the office of the complex. Fortunately, the petitions had been taken home by the proprietor of the sawmill.

Protesters constantly harangued workers attempting to go about their lawful means of earning a living, threatening them and their families with reprisals if they continued to earn a living.

Many protesters told workers that the real issue involved in Terania Creek was to change the democratic process so that their views were given greater prominence and the community was brought around to supporting their views. If the community did not support the protesters, they were told, then the community was wrong.

Severe environmental damage was caused by the demonstrators running through the rainforest en masse and blocking streams to divert them to wash away the road into the rainforest.

It was evident that when unemployment benefits were paid, there were virtually no protesters in the forest.

### THE NORTH COAST TIMBER INDUSTRY

The 6,000 cubic metres of timber supplied by the forests of Terania Creek represent six months supply of timber for the Standard Sawmilling Company in Murwillumbah.

The company is planning a long-term future in the area. Sawmilling was one of the first industries into the area, and it will be one of the last to leave. Careful husbanding of the forest resource will allow a secure and long-term future for the industry in the area.

It is true that the forests throughout the North Coast have been over-cut in the past. It is true that many sawmills on the North Coast have amalgamated to strengthen the industry's future and to make technological advances more viable.

But suggestions by opponents of the industry that it is about to close down are entirely without foundation. In fact with larger sawmills, capable of producing large quantities of timber, the future of the industry is brighter than ever before. The North Coast timber industry has played and will continue to play a vital part in the supply of timber to the people of New South Wales both now and in the centuries to come.

In short, the timber of the North Coast will not "run out" as has been suggested. Any inspection of the forests of the North Coast will easily refute such a claim.

### CONSERVATION OF RAINFORESTS

Rainforests throughout the State and, indeed in Australia, are being adequately conserved. In fact, if the views of Professor R.L. Specht, author of the publication "Conservation Status of Plant Communities in Australia" are taken into account, then the rainforest communities of Australia have an "excellent" conservation status.

The rainforests harvested by the sawmilling industry are also being conserved. Those in Terania Creek, while they have been harvested previously, are the subject of spectacular regeneration.

In general, the rainforests in Australia are being conserved — normally under Forest Service control — so that they will provide a yield of timber — and a source of recreation — for generations to come.

It is also interesting to note that Terania Creek received only a passing mention in even the Total Environment Centre's publication "Forest Ecosystems their future in New South Wales". This mention in the controversial publication was under the heading of "Problem Areas". Terania Creek failed to receive any recognition in even this publication's final recommendations.

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## SUMMARY

The sawmilling industry, acting on the advice of the State Government, harvested the Terania Creek basin on three previous occasions, just as it has been harvesting countless other similar, if not identical, areas throughout the State.

It has recently attempted to harvest the hardwood forests of Terania Creek – again with State Government approval – but has been prevented from carrying out its task of supplying timber to the community by a group of violent protesters who have used every means possible to provoke retaliatory violence.

The timber from Terania Creek will be removed under the environmental protection guidelines laid down by the Government – a condition of the Government's approval for the harvesting.

Attempts at achieving compromise with the protesters have failed.

Since the State Cabinet decision, none of the advice

provided to the Government has changed. The only change has been the introduction of the protests.

Should the Government back down on this issue, further such demonstrations may be anticipated. It is a fact that protesters threatened such action throughout the State during the demonstrations.

In addition, the introduction of an Environmental Impact Study system will bankrupt the industry and will certainly destroy the Government's economic stability.

The sawmilling industry has a future as long as mankind in the area – carrying out its traditional role of supplying timber to people.

We ask only that the industry – and the workers in it – be permitted to return to their peaceful existence of carrying out that function, without interference or fear of Government reversals of decisions.

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## ASSOCIATED COUNTRY SAWMILLERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

ADC KENT, 189 KENT STREET, SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000. TELEPHONE (02) 27 9256

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GOVERNMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
STATE POLLUTION CONTROL COMMISSION

"WOODCHIPPING ON THE NORTH COAST"

being comment on  
AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
for a  
NORTH COAST WOODCHIP EXPORT PROJECT  
as proposed by  
SAWMILLERS EXPORTS PTY. LTD.

submitted by the  
NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF NSW

prepared by  
J. K. Hibberd, B.Sc.

January 1978

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Nature Conservation Council of NSW made a submission to the NSW Government Cabinet Development Co-ordinating Committee in relation to a proposed North Coast Woodchip Industry in February 1977 (1). Since we believe that the Environmental Impact Statement presented by Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. (2) does not contain any new information which warrants any substantial revision to our previous submission, recommendations that the Council made then are hereby re-stated and re-emphasised;

- 1.2
- (a) Only 100% sawmill waste to be utilised - this proviso to be written into the agreement (but see Recommendation 4);
  - (b) Safeguards be written into any agreement to ensure that only genuine sawlogs are extracted from the forest;
  - (c) No timber should be utilised from private forests until such time as, at least, environmental safeguards and regulations comparable to those operating in public forests are available and enforced;
  - (d) Forest residues should be utilised only if new independent research programmes reveal management techniques which prevent net nutrient losses and which also prevent the loss of any forest habitats and ecological niches;
  - (e) All woodchips should be transported by rail to Newcastle for loading onto large vessels - all infrastructure costs to be met by the operator.

1.3 In general this Council is unhappy with the quality of the EIS in three respects: Firstly, there are serious inconsistencies in a number of areas - utilisation of resources from private lands, supplies to other chip users, resource availability, and even between tables and diagrams, eg Diagrams 3.2 and 5.1. Secondly, although a bibliography is given, there is virtually no detailed reference to data sources in the text thus making detailed confirmation of information presented difficult to attain. Thirdly, we believe that the Statement is deliberately vague on the proposed operations of the project after the initial three-year period. There is no environmental impact assessment in respect to the ecological effects of the utilisation of forest residues, agricultural clearings, regrowth thinnings, etc (in contradiction to Cabinet Decision 7b) (3) and there is no precise information tendered on either the method of transport of chips or on the final export point.

## 2. COMPANY STRUCTURE

Before examining the environmental effects of the EIS prepared by Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd., we wish to bring the attention of the Government to a matter concerning the structure of the proposed company. On page 3 of the Statement details are given of the proposed ownership of the company. In stating that the 51% holding of Blue Metal Industries will ensure at least 51% Australian participation (as stipulated by Cabinet Decision 3) (3) the EIS is in error. Blue Metal Industries, as is clearly shown in the proposal, have a small element of foreign ownership themselves which reduces the Australian content, through Blue Metal Industries, of Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. to less than 50%. Admittedly, the consortium indicates local sawmillers are being considered as potential participants, but no firm details are given. This Council recommends that the Government should stipulate in the terms of any licence, if granted, that Australian ownership must be 51% or greater at all times.

## 3. THE RESOURCE

### 3.1 Utilisation of Forest Residues

3.1.1 This Council agrees that the proposal of Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. to chip sawmill wastes would utilise a resource which is being burnt at present. However, this Council is concerned over the obvious intention of the Consortium to move into direct forest operations (through the utilisation of forest residues together with silvicultural and agricultural residues) after the initial three year period - *"logging and forest residues also form part of the project resource"* (2-Pg.10).

3.1.2 As stated clearly in our earlier submission (1-Pg.4), the Nature Conservation Council believes that inadequate research has been carried out in Australia on the effects of forestry practices on nutrient cycling, soil erosion and wildlife habitats. We believe that, in the first instance, extraction by heavy machinery could result in soil compaction, subsequent increased runoff and erosion coupled with reduced germination of seeds (4). Additionally, such disturbance could result in a far greater incidence of weed infestation which is a growing problem in native bushland throughout the North Coast region. Secondly, the removal of forest residues can have a marked effect upon the nutrient balance of the ecosystem. Extensive studies overseas have shown that careful research and planning is needed to ensure that the amount of nutrients removed in wood products balances inputs to the forest ecosystem via rainfall, run-off and the weathering of the parent rocks. If nutrient removal exceeds supply, it is obvious that a gradual rundown in available nutrients will occur with a parallel decline in the forest's productivity. In the



absence of suitable Australian research data we submit that no residues should be utilised until such information becomes available. This belief was re-echoed by the Senate Woodchip Enquiry (5) where they state, "*Environmental threats, notably those relating to soil nutrients, wildlife preservation and the conservation of genetic characteristics are less well understood and require further research to identify their true nature and magnitude and to determine ways to counter them effectively*" (Conclusion 4).

3.1.3 While we concur with the proponents' suggestion that further research is necessary, we do not believe that it can be effectively carried out within a three year period as proposed. Our Executive Secretary personally participated in a forest ecosystem study under the International Biological Programme and even after five years concentrated research by a team of over twenty scientists only preliminary results were emerging - additionally, in that case, much initial data was available in direct contrast with the North Coast forests. While this Council would recommend a minimum research period of ten years, we feel that the economics of the operation, the threat of future unemployment, and the possible withdrawal of investment capital could mitigate against any future NSW Government making a decision unfavourable to the consortium. We, therefore, believe that any initial licence should only be granted in respect to sawmill wastes derived from land controlled by the Forestry Commission and that a new EIS should be submitted in respect of any expansion utilising forest residues. If such a further EIS is deemed satisfactory, the Government could then issue a supplementary licence.

3.1.4 Although Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. believe that the Forestry Commission would be able to ensure the removal of such forest residues "*in an environmentally acceptable manner*", the Senate Enquiry (5) severely criticised Forestry Authorities in Australia for their lack of supervision, finding that "*not only are current environmental protection measures inadequate in some respects but also that their enforcement is unsatisfactory*" (Conclusion 6). It is worth noting that the Premier has already stated (6) that "*before the Forestry Commission is allowed to become involved in the approval or management of any North Coast woodchip schemes, there should be clear legislative control over all forestry practices on public or private lands, and the Forestry Commission must be able to demonstrate that it can adequately carry out its existing commitments*". In any case, additional supervision by the Forestry Commission would amount to a Government subsidy through wages paid - this would be in direct contravention of Cabinet Decisions 4 and 5 (3).

- 3.1.5 This Council strongly believes that further research should be fully funded by the proponents and not subsidised by the NSW Government as suggested on page 37 of the EIS where the consortium state that *"the expenses involved in these studies could be met jointly by the NSW Forestry Commission, the present timber companies operating in the region, and the woodchip export consortium."* This statement clearly disregards the wishes of State Cabinet as expressed in their Decision 4 and 5 (3).

### 3.2 Marginal Logs

While the consortium insists that the chipping of mill wastes only will have no environmental impact, this statement will only be true as long as there is no pressure on sawmillers to remove reject logs which otherwise would have remained to decay in the forest and thus to recycle their nutrients. Similarly, whereas the miller might not remove a tree he can see to only contain 30% sawlog potential, he might be tempted to take such a log if he has a market (ie woodchip) for the remaining 70%. This would lead to a more intensive use of the existing forest resource without adequate research having been completed into the long term ecological effects of such activities. Such operations must be strictly forbidden under the terms of the licence for, as the Senate Inquiry (5) states, *"approval of any such schemes should however incorporate safeguards to ensure that material chipped is restricted to genuine wastes and residue, and that additional trees are not felled merely to maintain or increase chip supplies"*. Similarly, the State Pollution Control Commission (7 - Pg10) recommended that *"appropriate measures be taken to ensure that logs could produce saleable timber are not fed to chip mills."*

### 3.3 Chips From Private Lands

The open-ended proposals over the use of non-sawmill waste resources give little detail of the exact sources of such chips and it is obvious (e.g. through the use of agricultural land clearing residues) that wood from private lands is envisaged being utilised. This is in spite of the assurance given on Page 4 of the EIS that *"timber from private lands will not be purchased for chip production"*. The Cabinet Decision 10 (3) states clearly that *"wastes from private lands other than sawmill waste and logging waste are not to be used for woodchipping until appropriate statutory controls are enacted"*. However, 40% of the North Coast forested area is under private ownership and this Council is most concerned that no utilisation of these resources for chipping should be permitted until, as recommended by the SPCC (7-Pg.7), *"such*

time as there are adequate statutory powers to ensure the proper environmental control of tree removal and forest management on private lands". In fact the SPCC in 1975 was most concerned about the "possible indiscriminate exploitation of private land to provide material for woodchips" (7-Pg7). It is also worth noting the NSW Labor Party Policy (8) relating to woodchipping, which states:

"5.2 That any chipping operations on the North Coast be limited to woodchips derived from the slabs offcuts and dockings that would be rejected as wastes in normal saw-milling operations and to forest residues gathered from forests under the supervision of the Forestry Commission in an environmentally acceptable manner. That no approval be given to the export of woodchips derived from the milling of sawlogs derived from private lands, until such time as there are adequate statutory powers to ensure the proper environmental control of tree removal and forest management on private lands."

No legislation has been passed, or has been contemplated, to our knowledge, and we submit that no use at all should be made of any residues or wastes derived from wood harvested from private lands at this stage.

### 3.4 Availability of Resource

3.4.1 We believe that the proponents seriously over-estimated the available resource and that a shortage of supply will force them to utilise forest residues, logging wastes, and to generally intensify forest activities on the North Coast. Using figures "generally accepted by the timber industry", the SPCC (7-Table 5) found that 346,000 tons of woodchip could be derived from sawmill wastes on the North Coast - however Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. indicate in their EIS that 533,774 tons are available (Table 3.1). They have erred in allowing a conversion ratio of approximately 50% waste from sawlogs when their own figure, 3.2, indicates that 43% of sawlog volume could be utilised as chips and while the SPCC uses a value of only 33%. The depiction of overall NSW data in Table 13.2 to indicate an anticipated increase in sawlog yield from plantations (thus counteracting the expected sawlog decline forecast by FORWOOD) is highly misleading. If Table 3, Appendix B-2 (7) from the SPCC Inquiry Report which gives data relating to the North Coast region is examined a different picture emerges of the availability of the resource. Cabinet Decision 8 (3) states

that sufficient waste wood must be available from tree felling activities under the control of the Forestry Commission to allow an export licence to be granted for 350,000 tons per annum. Since the SPCC has found that only 346,000 tons is available now and, noting that saw log production from lands over which the Forestry Commission has timber rights is declining, this Council believes that there is very little hope of obtaining such a yield from sawmill waste alone. Our main concern is over the use of forest residues as outlined above and consequently we wish to recommend that the proponents should be requested to provide precise data on the source of its chips on an annual basis before their proposal is allowed to proceed.

- 3.4.2 In describing the resource available the proponents estimate that 270,000 tons of logging residues would be available annually while continuing to state that silvicultural and agricultural residues (including agricultural land clearing residues) would add to the total resource - although they *"would not be used at all in the initial stages of the woodchip operation"*.
- 3.4.3 The Nature Conservation Council believes that such statements are the 'thin edge of the wedge' and indicate only too clearly the sources from which chips will be derived when the proponents either realise that sawmill wastes will provide much less than 350,000 tons per annum or when the industry wishes to expand. At many points in the EIS, Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. try to pull a veil over their proposed supplies (excluding sawmill wastes) and nowhere is there any assessment of the ecological impact such activities would have upon forest ecosystems. However, the Forestry Commission (7-Pg.53) has indicated that, were regrowth thinnings to be chipped (as proposed) *"there would be a greater rate of removal of thinnings from forests than would occur if there were no woodchip industry"*. On the other hand the Forestry Commission (7-Pg.28) believes that *"only a very small percentage of the potentially available logging waste and unsaleable trees (reject trees) from State Forests could be utilised for woodchips since the material would have to be extracted .... without damage to the forest environment"*. In fact Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. note that there is understandable concern that the *"extraction of additional material from the forest .... may have certain adverse environmental impacts"*. They state *"if however the operation were to be expanded by utilising logging waste or silvicultural thinnings for woodchips, then it could be expected that roading, log dumps and the general damage done in the forest by mobile equipment could be extended"*.

- 3.4.4 When one removes the availability of resource derived from private lands and also takes into account the belief of the Forestry Commission (7-Pg.8) that there should be considerable doubts about the economic feasibility of removing most logging wastes and probably any silvicultural residues from forests (under their jurisdiction) in an environmentally acceptable manner, it therefore seems difficult to see from where exactly the chip resource will be derived. Can the proponents justify their belief that *"a woodchip project, once in operation on the North Coast, is bound to develop and expand"* without heavy use of forest residues, utilisation of timber from private lands and possibly even future clearfelling at a time when the NSW Government may have pressure exerted upon it to maintain the level of employment initially created on a resource (based solely on sawmill waste as continually emphasised in the EIS) which clearly does not exist.

#### 4. TRANSPORT

- 4.1 While every attempt is made in the EIS to convey the impression that rail transport is the method to be used; *"where economics permit chips will be trucked from North Coast sawmills to the nearest rail siding in the area, then railed to Newcastle"* (2-Pg.4), *"the chips are to be exported by road and rail to Kooragang Island"* (2-Pg.35), Diagram 2.1, together with lengthy discussion of precise details; the consortium's real intention is clearly stated on Page 20 - *"road transport to Newcastle is proposed initially"*. Even when 'expansion' occurs, Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. state that they would *"be involved in considerable capital expense to effect the rail transport of chips"* (2-Pg.20). However, it is worth noting that the cost of rail haulage of approximately \$10/tonne would be offset by both the saving in the shipping freight rate and also by the contribution of about \$5/tonne towards the fixed costs of the NSW Government Railways. Since no detailed negotiations have been completed with the Public Transport Commission nor has any precise information been presented on relative costs; *"There are many areas yet to be finalised .... relating to economic and financial aspects of the proposal"* (2-Pg.54); we submit that the proponents have no intent to utilise the railway network to transport chips.
- 4.2 This Council is concerned at the imprecise nature of the traffic density figures given in Table 6.1 - do these relate to maximum, minimum or average data? We also wish to dispute that the stated figure of 12.9% increase (Pacific Highway, north of Kempsey) (2-Pg.22) is not a significant value.

It is interesting to note (5-Pg.22) that experience in Tasmania indicates that *"wear and tear is not a function of vehicle numbers, heavy vehicles have a much greater impact than cars"*. It is also worth remembering that several submissions from local councils to the SPCC Inquiry indicated that *"costs of road maintenance are a heavy burden"* (5) and that *"the woodchip industry should pay for maintenance .... through levies on the trucks or by earnings of the product"*. It makes economic nonsense to have 20 trucks per day using the Pacific Highway between Coffs Harbour and Newcastle with their consequential road damage while unitised trains are available to perform the same task and in addition contribute over \$1 million annually to the NSW Government. However, the proponents refute strongly in Section 16.5 that any attempt should be made to levy further royalties on woodchips produced from sawmill waste. We also wish to question the proponents' concept of the use of unitised trains and draw attention to their statement that such trains *"will therefore travel north empty"* (2-Pg21). This Council does not understand why this should necessarily be the case in all circumstances.

- 4.3 In fact, the consortium is not even convinced that Newcastle should be the export point, *"Newcastle .... may not be the ultimate port used for woodchip export"*, *"Newcastle will be used, even if for a limited period"*, and *"the consortium would favour the use of Coffs Harbour"*. This Council believes that both the State Government and the SPCC have already made it abundantly clear that Coffs Harbour is not favoured as an export point for woodchips, while Cabinet Decision 13 (3) clearly states that *"Newcastle is preferred as the port of shipment for the industry"*.

## 5. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 5.1 Although the proposal indicates that additional employment will be directly available for 164 persons (Pg.30), this Council believes, especially in the light of decreasing sawlog availability on the North Coast, that many of these positions would be filled by persons already working in the timber industry. It is considered highly likely that a considerable proportion of the 110 persons estimated to be additionally employed in the mills (2-Table 8.1) would be existing mill workers whose duties would be re-organised. Sawmills operating at or near the 'break-even' point financially will not be keen to take responsibility to employ additional staff when the re-direction of existing workers

may prove sufficient - atleast initially. The Premier of NSW has publicly stated (6) that the North Coast "is a tourist resort and tourism will ensure its economic future". Additionally, he has stated (6) that "the residents of the North Coast would benefit more directly if the official and unofficial subsidies which the State and Federal Governments would have to give to a woodchip industry, were directed to supporting developments more obviously in the residents' interest; for example, the support of local light industry, the proper management of the North Coast forests to support the sustained production of sawlogs, better tourist facilities and support for the commercial fishing industry".

- 5.2 In a number of instances in the proposal, Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. undertake to guarantee supplies of chips to both Hardboards of Australia and Australian Paper Manufacturers. However, on Page 37, the proponents state that such supplies "will be available in such levels that the viability of the chip export project is not reduced". In other words, Hardboards and Australian Paper Manufacturers would only receive chips surplus to Sawmills Export requirements. This statement assumes greater significance when the already demonstrated low resource availability is taken into account. We submit that the establishment of a North Coast woodchip export project, as envisaged in this proposal by Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd., would seriously diminish resources required by Hardboards and Australian Paper Manufacturers and will ultimately reduce future employment potential of these two companies.
- 5.3 This Council fails to understand how this proposal complies with the Cabinet intentions laid down to Mr. Chapman of Allen Taylor (3) where it is stated that the Government needs to be satisfied that the proposal "provides an equitable return to all sawmillers" and that the proponents will "protect prices paid to those sawmillers who are not able to participate financially in the venture". In Section 15.2 the consortium notes that "it is yet to be seen whether the sawmillers of the area will be willing to provide the necessary capital" (ie by buying equity in the project), while on Page 52 they state "if the consortium has the responsibility for transporting chips from the mill, they may make similar distance-adjustments to the price paid". This Council would like to see a detailed statement from the proponents indicating the names of sawmills prepared to participate, the price to be paid for their chips, and the impact of such arrangements on local mill employment.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 In conclusion, the Nature Conservation Council finds that the Environment Impact Statement for a North Coast woodchip export project as proposed by Sawmillers Export Pty. Ltd. is unsatisfactory in its presentation, lacks adequate data for proper informed judgement to be made of the relative merits and demerits of the project, and deliberately seeks to withhold certain decisions until a more opportune time when the NSW Government might be prepared to be more flexible with its controls. This Council wishes to bring the Government's attention to the Senate Committee's main recommendation (5) that *"With the exception of proposed projects intending to use as chip materials only waste from genuine sawlog operations, no licence for the export of woodchips should be issued to new projects"*. They also emphasised that any such licences issued should be revoked immediately if additional felling operations occur after the initial approval.
- 7.2 Specifically, the proposal does not satisfy, beyond all reasonable doubt, the following NSW Government Recommendations:
- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Cabinet Decision 3      | 51% Australian equity  |
| Cabinet Intention       | Equitable return and protected prices to sawmillers.                     |
| Cabinet Decision 4 & 5  | No Government financial contribution, support or guarantee.              |
| Cabinet Decision 7(b)   | Evidence on ecological effects.  |
| Cabinet Decision 8      | Sufficient waste wood to be available from Forestry Commission fellings. |
| Cabinet Decision 9      | Controls on woodchips from Forestry Commission lands.                    |
| Cabinet Decision 10     | Controls on woodchips from private lands.                                |
| Cabinet Decision 11     | Additional tree felling for woodchips.                                   |
| Cabinet Decision 13     | Newcastle as port of shipment.   |
| SPCC Recommendation 4.2 | Woodchips derived from private lands.                                    |
| SPCC Recommendation 4.4 | Measures to ensure saleable sawlog timber not fed to chip mills.         |



7.3 Our Final Recommendations are as follows:

RECOMMENDATION 1

A FURTHER DETAILED STATEMENT BE REQUIRED FROM SAWMILLERS EXPORT PTY. LTD. INDICATING:

- (i) THE EXISTING SOURCES OF CHIPS ON AN ANNUAL BASIS.
- (ii) SPECIFIC COSTS OF RAIL AND/OR ROAD TRANSPORTATION OF CHIPS.
- (iii) SPECIFIC INTENT TO PERMANENTLY UTILISE NEWCASTLE.
- (iv) SAFEGUARDS TO ENSURE NO ADDITIONAL REMOVAL OF WOOD FROM FORESTS.
- (v) DETAILS OF PARTICIPATING SAWMILLS AND CHIP PRICING STRUCTURE.

RECOMMENDATION 2

UPON SATISFACTORY COMPLIANCE WITH RECOMMENDATION 1, AND AFTER FURTHER PUBLIC SCRUTINY, PERMISSION BE GRANTED FOR A LICENCE FOR THE CHIPPING OF SAWMILL WASTES FROM TIMBER DERIVED FROM LANDS ONLY UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION.

RECOMMENDATION 3

- (a) NO PERMISSION BE GRANTED FOR THE UTILISATION OF FOREST RESIDUES, SILVICULTURAL THINNINGS, ETC.; EVEN FROM FORESTRY COMMISSION LANDS, UNTIL FURTHER INDEPENDENT RESEARCH, FUNDED BY THE PROPONENTS UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE NSW GOVERNMENT, IS COMPLETED AND PUBLISHED.
- (b) NO ADDITIONAL LICENCE TO BE GRANTED UNTIL A NEW ENVIRONMENT IMPACT STATEMENT IS PREPARED, SUBMITTED, SUBJECTED TO PUBLIC EXAMINATION, AND FOUND SATISFACTORY.

RECOMMENDATION 4

TIMBER FROM PRIVATE LANDS SHOULD ONLY BE PERMITTED TO BE UTILISED, SUBJECT TO THE ABOVE RECOMMENDATIONS, WHEN ADEQUATE STATUTORY CONTROLS ARE ENACTED TO ENSURE THE PROPER ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE LANDS.

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10/1/78

# Printed by ECO Press, 399 Pitt Street, Sydney. N.S.W. 2000

# Published by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. 1978.

2 May 1975

Stella Enervoldson  
Big Banana  
Coffs Harbour  
New South Wales 2450

Dear Mrs. Enervoldson,

As arranged with Inez Thackway (and after speaking with Paul Scobie of the Australian Conservation Foundation) I am attaching a list of north coast environment organisations which might be of help with regard to your Anti-Woodchip Campaign.

Anti-woodchip Action Committees have been set up at Mullumbimby (Rus Maslin);; Maclean (Don Wattus); Tamworth (Robert Prater); Laurieton (Jill Diewok); Armidale (Peter Metcalf); Port Macquarie (Grace Easterbrook); Coffs Harbour (Peter Roberts).

If we can be of further help or if you require any other environment and conservation organisations' names and addresses further afield, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Towards a better environment,

Pam Howard  
for  
NSW Environment Centre

WOODCHIPPING ON THE NORTH COAST -  
SOME BACKGROUND NOTES

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1. Table of Information
2. Sources of Woodchips
3. Arguments for and against
4. Major statements on the issue
5. Pulpwood production
6. Government Inquiries

Compiled by Jeff Angel  
Research Officer  
Total Environment Centre  
December, 1974.

4. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EXPORT WOODCHIP PROPOSALS FOR N.S.W. NORTH COAST

	Consortium	Tonnes per year	Forest Districts	Harbour	Chipmill Site	Employment	Trucks per day	Market	Income \$m per year
4.1	C. Itoh & Co. Ltd. Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd. (subsidiary of Blue Metal Industries Ltd.)	350,000 by year	Coffs Harbour Kempsey, Glen Innes, Private property within 75 miles of Coffs Harbour	Coffs Harbour (to be dredged)	Sawmills	50-55 men for forest opera- tions. 20 men in transport & associated services	75	Japan	2.1 to saw- millers. 2.4 to trans- port indus- try.
4.2	Standard Sawmill- ing Co. Pty Ltd. (owned by Duncans Holdings), Carter Consolida- ted Ltd.	Increas- ing from 300,000 to 500,000 over five years	Still investi- gating	Pinkenba Wharf, Brisbane	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Japan	Not stated
4.3	Toyomenka (Aus- tralia) Pty Ltd., Nippon Pulp In- dustry Co. Ltd. (Japan, Toyomenka Kaisha Ltd. (Japan)	300,000 minimum	Tamworth Walcha	Iluka (480M of northern breakwater to be moved 100M to north west)	Possibly Iluka or satellite chip plant or at saw- mills	120 men at chip plant (s) 50 men in transport 20 indirect	70-80	Japan	Minimum of 1.3 to state Government (rates, etc)
4.4	Companies in No.3 Proposal	Not known	Discussions continuing with Q'ld. Dept. Forests	Brisbane possibly Fisherman's Island	Industrial area of Brisbane Pt. & at sawmill	Not stated	Not stated	Japan	Not stated
4.5	Companies in No.3 Proposal and Hardboard Austra- lia Ltd.	259,000	Newcastle (Tea Gardens N.W. to Muswellbrook), Sydney Metrop. Taree, Wauchope, Part of Tamworth not included in AA report	Kooragang Is. Newcastle	At loading site	Not stated	Not stated	Japan	Not stated

## 2. SOURCES OF WOODCHIPS

### 1. Itoh/Taylor

- i) "... "Crown log residues such as branches, from areas being logged for sawmill logs"
- ii) "The thinning of suppressed trees in areas being logged ..."
- iii) "Silvercultural thinnings from regrowth or even age stands with a 15-20 plus year history ..."  
Trees that are to be removed for thinning will be marked by the Forestry Commission."
- iv) "Timber stand improvement of areas that have not been previously logged. This entails the removal of trees that the Forestry Commission designates as unwanted ..."
- v) "Private property sources will come from areas where timber stands are not wanted. These areas will be felled and sawlogs removed before the remainder is used for woodchips."
- vi) Sawmill residue  
(preliminary E.I.S. p. 2)

The project "does not envisage any departure from existing sawmilling and/or forestry practices on the North Coast" (Allen Taylor letter to Total Environment Centre, 20th November 1974).

### 2. Standard Sawmilling/Carter

- i) "Mill waste, slabwood, edgings etc. arising in sawmills."
  - ii) Thinnings arising from forest management programs.
  - iii) Waste and non-millable logs from existing forest operations.
  - iv) Felling from land clearance and replanting programs."
- "There is no suggestion that areas of forest be clearfelled..."  
(Preliminary E.I.S. pp 1-2)

### 3 & 4. Toyomenka. (Aust.)

"... this project is not based on the normal method of obtaining woodchips, i.e. a clearfelling forest operation, which has become so distasteful to ecologists and environmentalists"

(preliminary E.I.S. "Environmental Considerations p 1)

wood chips of (i) Sawlog/sawmill residue.

ii) forest residue from Forestry Commission's silver-leaf and European culture and reafforestation programs.

iii) clearing of private lands.

(Environmental Questionnaire p 3)

### GENERAL: FORESTRY COMMISSION OF N.S.W.

"In the opinion of the Forestry Commission, there are, apart from the Eden area, no Crown or State-owned timber resources in N.S.W. which will support an economically viable woodchip export project similar to that at Eden."

"However, under some circumstances it may be feasible to establish and operate small projects based on the chipping of sawmill waste (at present usually burnt), and possibly supplemented by the use of some forest material not currently usable (e.g. heads of some trees, from which the main stem has been removed as a sawlog; trees of excessively bad form or faultiness such as are destroyed during timber stand improvement treatments)."  
(Woodchips from Eden.)

### 3. ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST.

The following is a summary of the major arguments for and against the woodchipping projects:

#### ARGUMENTS FOR:-

##### A. Economic

- i) More efficient use of timber resources.
- ii) Contribute to nation's export earnings.



iii) Motel/hotel businesses; engineering works; and automotive industry will benefit from the various activities associated with the operation.

iv) Provide employment and help protect present workforce.

v) Tourists will be attracted by ship and tug activity in the port area.

vi) Increases capital investment in the area e.g. Coffs Harbour project provides opportunity to develop deep water port.

#### B. Environmental

i) Pollution from sawmills residue (being burnt off) reduced.

ii) Reduction of fire hazard in forests.

iii) Increased forest floor space allows greater tree growth and supports larger populations of animals such as macropods.

iv) Rivers not polluted by forest residues.

v) No clear felling.

vi) Precautions will be taken, for example, the port developments involved in the Coffs Harbour scheme will not affect the beach nor future improvements. Nor will the water run-off from the chip pile affect marine life. Blow-off of chips from the pile and trucks will be prevented.

vii) Increased revenue from forest operations enable a much improved system of wildlife protection to be instituted. (N.S.W. Forestry Commission argument.)

#### C. Social

i) The growth of population stimulated by the wood-chip industry will facilitate the improvement of social amenities. (Shops, roads, schools, etc.)

**ARGUMENTS AGAINST:**  
**Economic**

(i) Disruption of tourist industry by degradation of the environment (see B).

Tourism is a composition of transport, accommodation, catering, retailing, entertainment and sight-seeing services. It is a stabiliser in a world of rural fluctuations.

At least five major tourist-land developments were reported by Peter Allen in the Sun-Herald (19.8.73) to be either planned or under way on the North Coast - at Port Stephens, Valla Beach (near Nambucca Heads), Angourie (10 km from Iluka); Coffs Harbour and Ballina.

Sir John Fuller, then Minister for Decentralisation and Development, said that the multiple benefits from the Clarence Valley developments "could be very significant" in terms of employment and income.

Chairman of the N.S.W. Development Corporation, Mr. Gordon McCartney, who is involved in these proposals, expressed sentiments about Gold Coast type development, which could equally apply to the Woodchip projects. He said, "We are not going to allow something that will destroy the uniqueness of the environment."

As early as 1959, Mr. T. H. Shaw (Senior Lecturer in Town Planning, University of N.S.W.) told a North Coast Tourist Development Conference, held in Grafton: "Two vital matters in developing a region, particularly for tourism, are the availability of land and the access to it."

Forest reserves and areas of landscape value and of unique flora and fauna must not be sacrificed. In fact these are the elements for promoting recreation and enjoyment.

Tourism, like properly managed forests, has an indefinite life, but its economic impact is far greater. It is bound to grow as leisure time increases; entails more amenable jobs than forestry; and stimulates the preservation of diversity.

ii) Chipped forests are used for wasteful packaging, representing a misallocation of resources.

iii) Costs of maintaining roads damaged by the flow of trucks carrying woodchips.

iv) There is a lack of agreement about future demand for forest products. Projections have depended on inaccurate estimates of population growth and wood competing products.

(See also R. & V. Routley - "The Fight for the Forests")

## B. Environmental

i) Only 2.7% of North Coast forests are preserved in National Parks and Nature Reserves. A larger percentage (subject to study) is needed to provide a solid base for tourism and preserve diversity. The proposals will irrevocably damage and commit some of our best forests to wood production, to the exclusion of other uses.

ii) The woodchip proposals are the "thin end of the wedge" for the establishment of a pulp wood industry. Such an industry is highly polluting and often employs the clear felling method to obtain its raw material.

iii) Removal of forest waste means loss of habitat for some animals.

iv) Increased flow of trucks causes noise and dust pollution. Traffic flows will also be adversely affected, therefore interfering with recreation and tourism.

v) Disruption of soil in areas for thinning, e.g. snagging tracks.

vi) Chip mills, dumps and ships (20,000 to 40,000 tons) are a visual eyesore and potential causes of other types of pollution.

vii) Lack of research into environmental effects of proposals.

viii) Possible introduction of "die-back" in forests. This fungal disease caused by *Phytophthora Cinnamomi* is spread by heavy machinery.

ix) Industry could lead to soil erosion causing siltation of catchment areas.

### C. Social

- i) Preservation of diversity in self sustaining units.  
This allows people to choose a range of environmental experiences and activities, e.g., wilderness areas provide a sense of adventure and solitude for bush-walkers.
- ii) Secrecy surrounding the current proposals.

## 4. MAJOR STATEMENTS ON THE ISSUE

1. "The woodchip export industry now threatens enormous areas of native forest in Australia with major changes. Large scale woodchipping will provide an inferior environment and will, over large areas, have drastic effects on wildlife, and seriously reduce the value of great areas of forests from the point of view of values other than wood production. These effects will be produced without any adequate research on their likely environmental effects."

(R. & V. Routley, "The Fight for the Forests").

2. "In the opinion of the Forestry Commission, there are apart from the Eden area, no Crown or State-owned timber resources in N.S.W. which will support an economically viable woodchip export project similar to that at Eden." (The Forestry Commission of N.S.W., "Woodchips from Eden.")

3. "Mr. Day (MLA, Casino) said the facts were that neither the woodchip nor the port facilities posed any threat whatever to the environment or to any other industries in the valley."

"At the same time our timber industry will be greatly enhanced by economic use being made of waste material and port facilities would be a great boost to profitable grain production in the area."

(Northern Star, Lismore, 7.12.74.)

4. "Mr. Scobie (N.S.W. Project Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation) said the woodchip industry utilized saw-mill waste. However, the waste contributed only 30% of woodchips. The remaining 70% came from forest areas ... Certain areas are already being over-cut. It appears as if the companies involved will end up clear-felling to meet and maintain overseas contracts."

(The Advocate, Coffs Harbour, 16.12.74)

5. Hon. T. L. Lewis  
Premier Elect  
Parliament House  
Sydney

Representatives of 34 organisations meeting in Coffs Harbour 15 December completely oppose current chipmill projects on North Coast which we regard as thin end of wedge for accelerated destruction of North Coast and Tablelands forests. We call on NSW Government to reject these destructive projects for which adequate supporting scientific studies are not available. Northern NSW needs dedication of adequate system of parklands before chipmilling is considered.

Grace M Easterbrook  
Chairman of Coffs Harbour Meeting  
Phone: Port Macquarie 83-1804

#### 5. PULPWOOD PRODUCTION

The production of woodchips is only one stage in the process by which timber is converted into wood pulp. The Forwood Conference identified a number of forces that would stimulate the establishment of a major pulpwood industry:

"One of the reasons for imposing the export control on wood chips in Australia was to ensure that a reasonable degree of further processing would be undertaken in Australia if economically feasible in the not too distant future. The wood chip exporting projects which presently have approval to export, all have an obligation to at least examine the feasibility of pulp production and, if feasible, to construct and operate a pulp mill."

"The forest development consequent upon chip export however, should have the advantage of upgrading the forests concerned to produce a higher quality pulpwood suitable for the manufacture of pulp for export. The present indications of the future development of a pulp export market in Japan and the upgrading of forests should weigh in the favour of the feasibility of development of pulp mills consequent upon chip export."

(Proceedings. Part 5. p 117)

The introduction of a uniform crop and demand is reinforced by pollution legislation in Japan:

"Anti-pollution legislation in Japan could cause Japanese pulp and paper makers to set up plants in other countries such as Australia." (Ibid. p 113)

Already, planning for pulp mills has begun. In a copy of an unverified letter (23.8.74) sent to the Total Environment Centre, Toyomenka (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. told the forestry and Timber Bureau:

"We confirm that we will carry out a feasibility study for a pulp mill within five years of operation. If the study indicates viability then we will erect a pulp mill by 1985."

Significantly (in an accompanying letter) the General Manager noted the Forestry Commission had "pressed" them to make such a study. He added, there would be problems of resource limitations (at least 800,000 tonnes of chips needed for an economically viable proposition), water supply and "that a pulpmill in the area (Iluka) would be so offensive to the environment that the erection of such a plant would never be approved."

The important point however, is that the N.S.W. Forestry Commission is prepared to pressure for pulp mills and presumably to back this up by a massive commitment of our forests.

Standard Sawmilling and Carter Consolidated have explicitly stated their intention to enter pulpwood production.

"When a sufficiently great annual volume of wood is being recovered (800,000 tonnes) and when economic conditions permit, the joint venture propose to install a pulp mill to convert the chips into a more valuable end product, for sale either within Australia or overseas, depending upon demand. Possible products would be:

neutral sulphite semi-chemical pulp

kraft pulp

corrugated medium refiner board

particle board"

(Preliminary E.I.S. p 2)

Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd. are to use their own eucalupt plantations on former agricultural lands in the Bellingen District, to produce wood pulp. A.P.M.'s approach is at first sight more responsible, because it does not involve public forests. Nevertheless, taken

together the woodchip and pulp projects, if allowed to "get a foot in" will make it all the harder for the other values of forests, to receive expression. Bargaining power will be built up in terms of contracts, employment and capital investment. This and the bureaucracy of the Forestry Commission of NSW, will be levelled against conservationists.

## 6. GOVERNMENT INQUIRIES

At present, the State Pollution Control Commission (GPO Box 2202, Sydney, 2001) is analysing submissions received for its investigation into the proposed woodchip industry on the North Coast. The last date for submissions is 31 December 1974, and terms of reference are:

- " \* The availability and location of both public and private timber resources suitable for woodchipping, and consideration of the alternative uses and demands for such resources.
- \* Environmental and related matters which are associated with the procurement of timber resources for woodchipping.
- \* The general aspects of transportation, establishment and operation of the necessary plant for processing and despatch of woodchips.
- \* The relationship between environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of the woodchip industry.
- \* The safeguards that would be necessary to control pollution and the disposal of waste and to protect the environment, with respect to all aspects of the woodchip industry."

Specific proposals will almost certainly be submitted early in the New Year in a developers' rush. The Standard Sawmilling/Carter project was proposed in preliminary form as far back as October 1973.

When applications are made for export licences, the Australian Government becomes involved. A further inquiry may be instituted at this stage, probably depending on how well the relevant Ministers have been lobbied.

# REFERENCES

Preliminary Environmental Impact Statements by Alan Taylor & Co. Ltd. and C. Itoh & Co. Ltd.; Standard Sawmilling Co. Pty. Ltd. and Carter Consolidated Ltd; and Toyomenka (Australia) Pty. Ltd.

R. and V. Routley - The Fight for the Forests (A.N.U. Press. 1974.)

Forestry Commission of N.S.W. - Woodchips from Eden (pamphlet).

Clarence Regional Conference - Planning for Tourist Development on the North Coast. (University of New England. Grafton, 1959.)

Forestry and Wood-Based Industries Development Conference - Working Party Report. Part 5. Pulp and Wood Chip.



# Chipping away at the national heritage

By IAN MOFFITT

"YAMBA?" says the switchgirl when I ask for a number there. "I'd love to be up that way now — beautiful country, plenty of fish, nice old pubs. It hasn't been spoilt by man yet."

Not yet — but Yamba, NSW may be smack on the edge of a woodchip wilderness if reported plans to chew up northern NSW forests gain approval. Don Wattus, an economics-geography teacher at the area's Maclean High School, hopes desperately that they won't.

He is the man I'm ringing. He's been out catching Jewfish on the high tide — but he fears the tide is running out for NSW's magnificent North Coast. "We seem to be anxious to hand over everything we've got to the Japanese," he says. "And we can't rely on the Federal Government to protect us on this issue."

Mr Wattus is secretary of the Clarence Valley Environment Protection Society, one of more than 30 conservation organisations fighting to stop Japanese-Australian woodchip penetration. The industry is seeking four footholds in an area 400 miles deep and 150 miles wide.

Woodchip-combines want to siphon NSW woodchips to Japan from four outlets: Pinkenba wharf (Brisbane), Coffs Harbor, Iluka (near Yamba) and Kooragang Island (Newcastle). The vision splendid: mobile chippers swallowing dwindling native forest to provide pulp for paper and cardboard.

## Anxiety

The short fibres of Australian hardwood pulp are crush-resistant in the final (ephemeral) product; the Japanese mix them with long-fibred anti-tearing softwood pulp. And that adds up to a grim outlook for Australians who prefer their eucalypt-forests perpendicular, not pulped for profit.

A young north coast cant-farmer, Tim Strange, suggested ringing Mr Wattus. Mr Strange left the Sydney railway to farm on Chatsworth Island, near Maclean, and he dropped into The Australian office on holiday to register his anxiety.

He likes to show his daughters the koalas in the bush behind the little pub at Iluka, but the woodchippers, he says, want that outlet-site

("Prime spot right behind the beach"). And every four minutes, he says, a mighty woodchip-carrier will roar along the road...

"Diggest fish producing river on Australia's coast, the Clarence," he claims. "Only the Gulf produces more prawns. The woodchip business will cause erosion and siltation if they let it in; the professional fishermen are up in arms. And the fear of it is affecting tourism already; people ask: 'Is the woodchip going in?' before they make bookings."

Four consortiums, three with Japanese backing, and all, apparently, with NSW Forestry Commission blessing, now want to slot NSW's North Coast into the woodchip jigsaw. The Japanese companies involved are C. Itoh and Co Ltd, Toyomenka (Aust) Pty Ltd, Nippon Pulp Industry Co Ltd, (Japan), and Toyomunka Kaisha Ltd, (Japan).

They state, in summation of their aims, that they will use sawmill-waste and forest-waste timber lying in the bush. Examples: "There is no suggestion that areas of forest be clearfelled... this project is not based on the normal method of obtaining woodchips — a clearfelling forest operation, which has become so distasteful to ecologists and environmentalists..." But local residents, naturally, fear that this will just be the thin end of the chipper.

The woodchippers quote bigger export earnings, local employment and capital investment (a Coffs Harbor deep-water port, for instance), a bigger population, better social amenities. They say that ship and tug activity will encourage tourists, and point out that increased traffic will benefit the local automotive industry. They will, in fact, improve the area.

Clearing will reduce fire-hazards in forests, stop forest-residues polluting rivers, and minimise sawmill burn-off pollution. Increased forest-floor space, allowing greater tree-growth will support more animals, and greater revenue will allow an improved system of wildlife protection.

These claims provoke howls of despair from conservationists, who believe that blanket clearfelling (taking the lot) will follow when woodchippers clear up the waste, with voracious Japanese orders to fill. This would erode beautiful wilderness areas — with pulp milling (which has desecrated Japan) likely to follow chip-milling.

Only 2.7 per cent of North Coast is locked in national parks and nature reserves, with the rest vulnerable to a highly-polluting pulp wood industry, plus soil erosion, siltation, chip-mills, dumps, and roaring flow of trucks. Animal habitats will go as the chippers chew to provide packaging.

Local opinion, of course, is divided. Mr Don Day, the State Labor member for Casino, is shadow minister for decentralisation and he visualises a multi-purpose deep-sea port at Iluka which will boost grain production and offer jobs. Neither woodchip nor port poses any threat to the environment, he declares. "Why not decentralise education and tourism instead?" asks Mr Wattus.

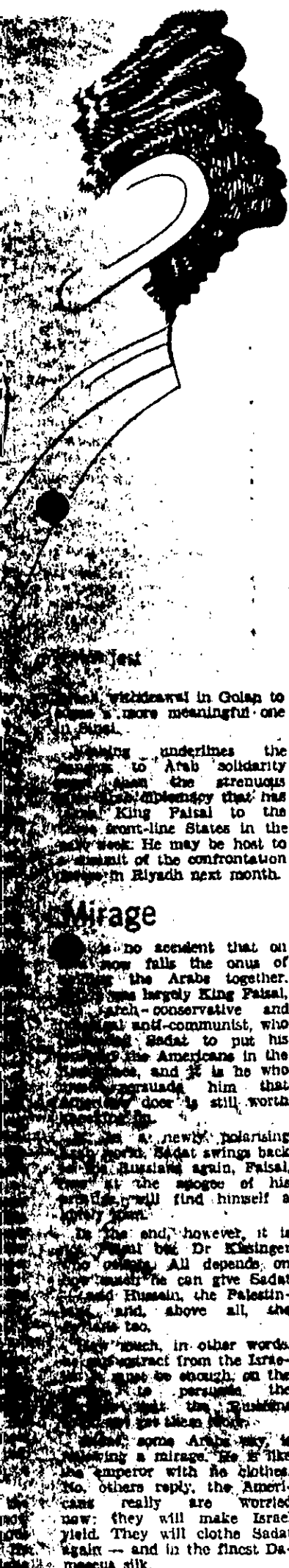
## Subsidies

The Australian Government is no beacon in the dark for the conservationists: its Australian Industries Development Corporation is already involved in Tasmanian woodchip extraction, and it gave the green light to the controversial Manjimup woodchip scheme in Western Australia before receiving an environmental impact study. Result: Australia's remaining 87 million acres of native forest are under severe threat from the woodchip-pulpwood industry and softwood pine plantations. More than one-quarter of Western Australia's real-forest area alone is already lined up for destruction.

Timber authorities like woodchip schemes because financial returns are quicker than with pine plantations, but the public treasury doesn't seem to get much out of it following heavy public subsidies of the business (the public pays for road-repairs, erosion-regeneration and so on).

The Australian Conservation Foundation has criticised inadequate environmental impact studies of the North Coast woodchip proposals, and 36 conservation organisations have protested to the NSW and Australian Governments against "the thin edge of the wedge for accelerated destruction of North Coast and North Tablelands forests". The State Pollution Control Commission in NSW is investigating the plans — and awaiting developers' detailed studies.

Mr Wattus is still catching fish, the koalas are still dreaming in the trees, and the woodchippers are hard at work on their jigsaw...



Woodchip  
filed

# SAWMILLERS WOODCHIPS PTY.LTD.

TELEPHONE: 29-7851  
TELEGRAMS: "MILLCHIPS" SYDNEY

5TH FLOOR,  
120 CLARENCE STREET,  
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000.

9th September, 1975

Mr. R. Tickner,  
NSW Environment Centre,  
c/o 263B The Broadway,  
BROADWAY. 2007

11 SEP 1975

Dear Sir,

Attached for your information is a copy of documents we have lodged with the Australian Government setting out details of this company's application for a licence to export wood chips from Northern NSW.


We are sure it will be of interest. At the same time, because of the special features of this proposal, we believe it will be acceptable to your organisation. You will appreciate the reason for eliminating the price details from the documents, but you can rest assured the prices are far better than any other chip prices in Australia.

Mr. Bruce Adams, Manager, Associated Country Sawmillers of NSW together with appropriate ACS Branch Presidents are being kept informed of the company's activities which are supported by the majority of sawmillers north of Sydney.

Any comments or suggestions on our proposal may be made direct to me or to any ACS Branch President in your region, or to the Association Manager in Sydney. These will then be included in our Environmental Impact Statement.

Copies of this letter are being sent to several other environmental organisations that we consider may be interested. If you would care to nominate any of your sister organisations that may be especially interested in a copy, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



D.O. EDMUNDS.

SAWMILLERS WOODCHIPS PTY.LTD.

Att.

c.c.: Environmental Organisations

ACS Branch Presidents:

Bill Royce - Richmond, Tweed & Clarence Branch  
Alex Pike - Coffs Harbour Dorrigo Branch  
John Machin - Manning Hastings Branch  
Ken Relf - Stroud Bulahdelah Branch  
Bruce Roper - New England Branch  
Jim Buckett - Blue Mountains Branch

ACS Manager  
Local Governments.

# SAWMILLERS WOODCHIPS PTY.LTD.

TELEPHONE: 29-7851  
TELEGRAMS: "MILLCHIPS" SYDNEY

5TH FLOOR,  
120 CLARENCE STREET,  
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000.

21st July, 1975

Mr. A.G. Hanson,  
A/g Director General,  
Forestry & Timber Bureau,  
Banks Street,  
YARRALUMLA. 2600

11 SEP 1975

Dear Sir,

## APPLICATION FOR EXPORT LICENCE

### WOOD CHIPS

In reply to your letter (M75/1445D) of 2nd June relating to the application for a wood chip export licence by this company. This is to confirm the application for the export licence for up to 525 000 tonnes a year.

Sawmillers in Northern NSW are not satisfied that the companies mentioned in your letter would establish a wood chip export operation that is necessarily in the best interests of either sawmillers or the general community.

Any such operation must ensure that at least the same volume of sawlogs is available to existing sawmillers long term, that damage to the environment is kept to a minimum and that the benefits arising from the operation far outweigh any disadvantages. It is for this reason this company, which is a consortium of sawmillers, was formed.

The formation of the company was also motivated by the dissatisfaction of sawmillers in Southern NSW with the Harris-Daishowa operation at Eden.

The company strongly believes that any wood chip operation on the North Coast must be part and parcel of the sawmilling industry with the primary objective of optimum utilisation of forest resources combined with the elimination of pollution - not just a company concerned with maximum export chip production and profit. This company will use the following criteria in the development of its North Coast wood chip operation:

2...

- a. The company will be controlled by sawmillers' interests.
- b. The great majority of the equity in the company will be Australian.
- c. The company will accept the responsibility for developing marketable products from other industry waste - including sawdust and bark (*our major pollutants*).
- d. The wood chip project will not adversely affect the volume of sawlogs available long term - but desirably will increase the volume.
- e. The company will ensure the maximum return to those that control the sawn residue resource thus allowing a significant contribution to be made to sawn timber costs.
- f. The company will operate at the minimum profit levels consistent with the primary objectives mentioned earlier.
- g. The best practicable use will be made of existing facilities and transport, etc., thus ensuring the lowest capital investments/requirements.
- h. Sawmill waste will be utilised from the largest possible region. *The region outlined on the attached map will be included in the operation.*
- j. The resource to be utilised for the production of wood chips will be materials that would otherwise be wasted.
- k. No private property timber except for sawmill waste will be used for wood chip production at least until acceptable guidelines (*or legislation*) have been established. In our opinion the significance of this has been underrated - it is of major concern to sawmillers and environmental organisations.
- l. The export of wood chips will be regarded as an interim measure only with priority being given to local utilisation - preferably for building products.

- m. The buyer of export wood chips will be a company that is not already purchasing or utilising wood chips from any other operation at least on the east coast of Australia and desirably from anywhere else in Australia.
- n. Any foreign equity allotted will purely be for the purpose of obtaining a better specification and/or more favourable price. Any such equity will be capable of being bought back at the end of the contract period.
- o. Transport distances and costs will be rationalised with all sawmillers receiving the same price (*at the sawmill or forest loading point*) for their waste or chips.
- p. The initial export contract period will not exceed 12 years. However, it may be necessary to renegotiate a renewal contract for a follow-up period of up to 5 years.

Companies involved in the existing proposals submitted to your Department will be invited to join with us in this scheme. Already, Standard Sawmilling Co. Pty. Limited has indicated it is interested in such an arrangement and agree that it should be studied. This does not mean that Standard withdraw their application for a wood chip export licence, but both groups seek time for such a venture to be explored more fully.

Also, there is a strong possibility that one other applicant for an export licence will be offered minority equity in this company and will become the buyer and Japanese agent for the company.

Preliminary discussions have been held with the appropriate NSW Government Departments and these have expressed keen interest. Also, close liaison with environmental organisations in the region is to be developed.

It is fully appreciated that considerable time has elapsed since the three existing proposals were put forward to your Minister. However, in view of the above, it is requested that no final decision be made for at least four months. This will allow all possibilities to be explored and the necessary Environmental Impact Statement to be prepared and submitted.

Attachment 1 outlines additional information you require. Please let me know what further information is needed.

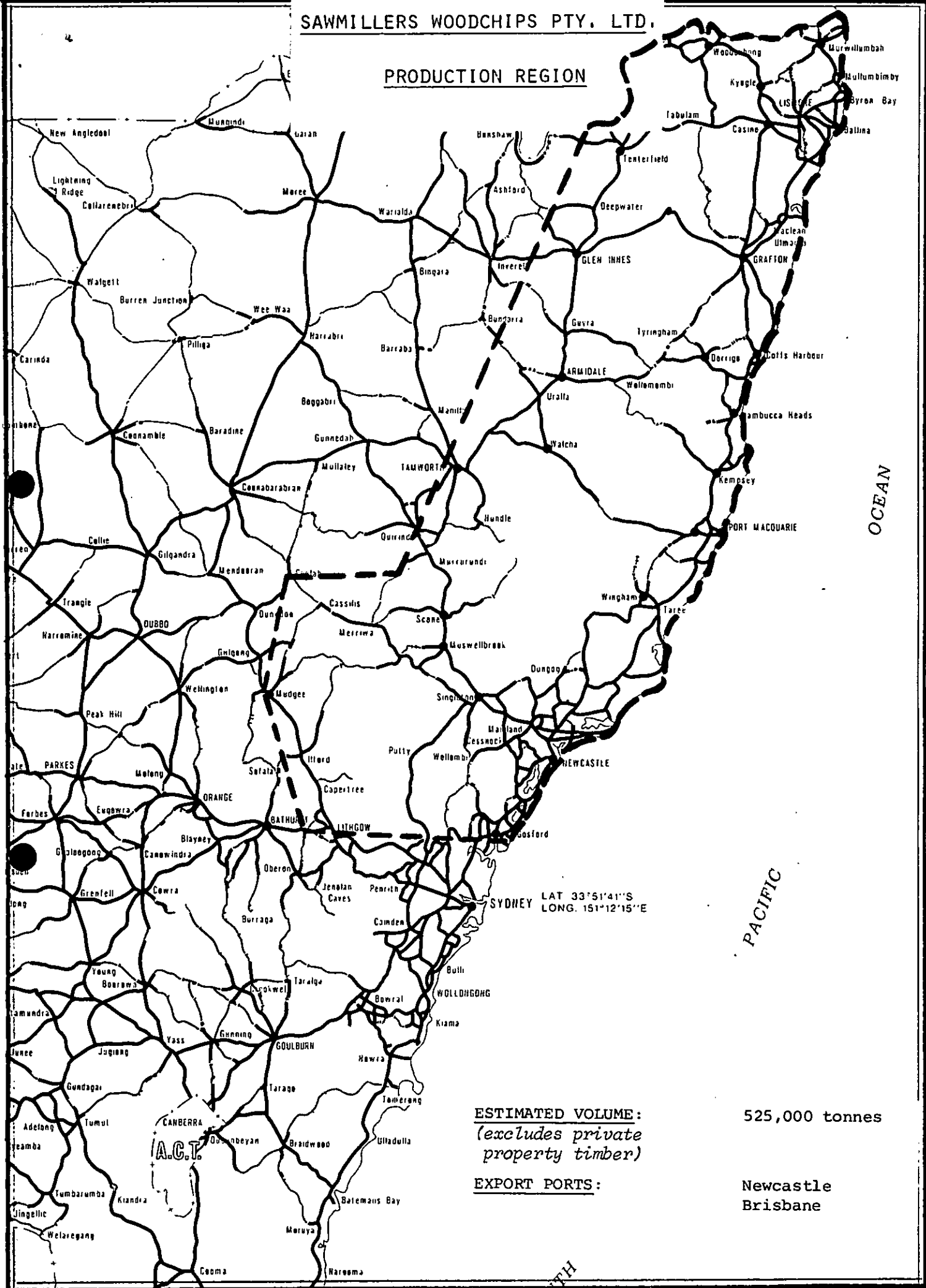
Mr. Bruce Adams, Manager, Associated Country Sawmillers of NSW is being kept informed concerning this application.

Yours faithfully,

D.O. EDMUNDS  
SAWMILLERS WOODCHIPS PTY.LTD.

Atts.

PRODUCTION REGION



ESTIMATED VOLUME:  
(excludes private  
property timber)

525,000 tonnes

EXPORT PORTS:

Newcastle  
Brisbane

11 SEP 1975

APPLICATION FOR EXPORT LICENCEWOOD CHIPS

11 SEP 1975

EXPORT PRICE

1. Base prices on offer range from \$A to \$A a BDU f.o.b. export port as at 1st July, 1975. The base price finally accepted will not necessarily be the highest on offer, it will be a compromise between the best production specification and the best price. However, it is expected to be in excess of \$A a BDU f.o.b. export port as at 1st July, 1975. NO price agreement has been finalised.

PRICE ESCALATION

2. Base prices will be subject to suitable and acceptable escalation arrangements on costs and prices and will be increased at the following intervals:

- a. Freight Costs  
Quarterly
- b. Other Costs  
At least half-yearly
- c. Market Values  
At least yearly

3. Escalation indexes currently under consideration include:

- a. Movement In Average Weekly Earnings
- b. Consumer Prices
- c. Wholesale Prices
- d. World Market Price for Pulp
- e. Japanese Market Price for Wood Chips.

CHIP MATERIAL

4. Chips will be produced from the following material:

- a. Sawmill Waste
  - i. Log Edgings
  - ii. Sawn Timber Dockings
  - iii. Boxed Heart

2...



- b. Logging Waste
  - i. Tree Branches
  - ii. Tree Tops
  - iii. Reject Log Butts
  - iv. Reject Felled Trees
- c. Forest Waste (*Crown only*)

Trees currently felled and generally burnt.

The above is roughly the sequence of development of the utilisation of what is now wasted. Sawmill waste utilisation will be given top priority and will be developed over the first 12 months.

NOTE:

*NO private property trees will be utilised at least until guidelines acceptable to sawmillers and environmental organisations have been established.*

PORTS AND FACILITIES

5. There will be two export ports; the primary port will be Newcastle (*initially the Basin and later Kooragang Island*) and the secondary port will be Brisbane (Pinkenba).

6. Existing facilities (*with minor upgrading*) will be used at both ports initially, with the facilities at Kooragang Island being developed over a 1-2 year period.

TRANSPORT TO EXPORT PORTS

7. Transport to export ports will be:

a. Newcastle

- i. Road transport - up to 100-150 miles
- ii. Rail transport - over 100 up to 350 miles.

b. Brisbane

- i. Road transport - up to 50-100 miles (*probably less*)
- ii. Rail transport - over 50 miles.

#### WOOD CHIP PRODUCTION

8. Wood chip production will take place as follows:

a. Decentralised Production

i. Fixed Production Units

Approximately eight fixed production units will be established by sawmillers at the larger sawmills throughout the production region. In addition to chipping their own production, some of these units will chip waste from the smaller mills close by.

ii. Mobile Production Units

Up to ten mobile production units will be used in the chipping of sawmill waste and also logging and forest waste.

b. Centralised Production

Centralised production units will be established at both ports. In the initial stages the centralised production unit servicing Newcastle (the Basin) will be at an industrial area within one-half hours road haul from the export wharf.

#### CONTRACT PERIOD

9. The company will attempt to keep the initial contract period to approximately 12 years or under. However, it may be necessary to go beyond this period to obtain more favourable contract arrangements.

#### FOREIGN EQUITY IN COMPANY

10. Minority equity of up to 30% in the company will be made available to the Japanese company that purchases the chips. This is expected to enable a far more attractive export chip price and chip specification to be negotiated.

11. A condition of the allocation of foreign equity will be that it can be bought back by Australian sawmilling interests at the conclusion of the contract period.

#### LOCAL PROCESSING

12. The company undertakes to investigate within 7 years the feasibility of the further processing of chips within Australia. It is considered that before the end of the initial contract period the company will have the potential and technical expertise to phase out the export operation and commence producing building products from the available waste.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

13. The company will within the next month commence the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for submission to your Department and the State Pollution Control Commission.

R A Walsh

56 Laelana Ave

Budgewoi.

Dear friend,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 11th September and the accompanying posters.

These posters are being eagerly sought after by teachers and others and we are very grateful for your action.

With Best Wishes

Robert E Tickner  
Acting Manager.

30-8-75

THE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE  
263 B THE BROADWAY  
SYDNEY 2000

56 LAELANA AVE,  
BUDGEWOI  
2263

11 SEP 1975

Dear Sir,

WOODCHIP POSTERS

Please find enclosed approx.  
80 posters entitled WOODCHIP LAUGHS AT YOU  
ALL THE WAY TO THE BANK.

I obtained these posters from  
Tasmania. However my outlets for  
distribution are somewhat limited.

I am forwarding them to  
your centre, since I hope you  
may be able to distribute the  
posters to interested members of  
the community.

Yours faithfully  
R. Walsh

R. A. WALSH

22 AUG 1974

"Karaluka Gallery,"  
Imlay Street,  
Merimbula, N.S.W.

2548

19-8-74

Attention Leigh Holloway  
N.S.W. Environment Centre,

Many thanks for your prompt  
response to my request the woodchip leaflets, would  
also like to thank you for arranging the posters,  
I can assure you they will be prominently displayed  
at the entrance to our Gallery.

Heri's hoping!

Regards,

Phyllis Hermond

(Mrs L. D. Hermond)

N. S. W.

E N V I R O N M E N T

C E N T R E

263b The Broadway  
Broadway, N.S.W. 2007

14 August 1974

Geoff Williams  
Woodchip Campaign  
P.O. Box 141  
Deloraine, Tasmania 7304

Dear Geoff,

I was interested to read in "Tribune", 6 August 1974, that your group has published the Woodchip pamphlet.

Could you please send me a few, plus 20 posters?

We received a letter yesterday from Phyllis Kermond of the "Karalika Gallery", Inlay Street, Merimbula, N.S.W. 2548, requesting material for display on woodchips and clear-felling. Could you also send Mrs. Kermond some posters and a couple of pamphlets?

Best wishes for your fight. Do keep us informed of progress.

Yours sincerely,



Leigh Holloway  
NSW ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

N. S. W.

ENVIRONMENT

CENTRE

Telephone: 660 0960

263b The Broadway  
Broadway, N.S.W. 2007

14 August 1974

Mrs. Phyllis Kermond  
"Karalika Gallery"  
Imlay Street  
Marimbula, N.S.W. 2548

Dear Mrs. Kermond,

Thank you for your letter of 12 August requesting leaflets on woodchips and clearfelling. We share your concern about the impact of this industry.

Ecology Action (139 Clarence Street, Sydney N.S.W. 2000) will be sending you 50 copies of their pamphlet "The Woodchip Tragedy".

The <sup>\*</sup>Australian Conservation Foundation (206 Clarendon Street, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3000) should also be able to supply material. *\* You will need to write to them, separately.*

In Tasmania there is a very active Woodchip Campaign group. I have asked them to send you posters and a copy of the leaflet they have issued.

The <sup>\*</sup>South Coast Committee, P.O. Box 16, 08Connor, A.C.T. 2601 may also be able to help.

Please let us know how things work out.

Best wishes,

*Leigh Holloway*

Leigh Holloway  
NSW ENVIRONMENT CENTRE

13 AUG 1974

"Karatika Gallery"  
Imlay Street  
Kerimbala N.S.W 2548  
12-8-74

Dear Sir,

M<sup>rs</sup> Vincent Serventy has told me that I can obtain leaflets from your department on woodchips and clearfilling, would it be possible to send me some of these to distribute in our Art Gallery here?

If possible, could we have them for the school holidays, we both feel very concerned about the impact of these operations on our natural lovely bushland & feel it might be better to start with the "unconverted", in other words the children.

Hoping you can help us in this matter,

yours faithfully,

Phyllis Hermond

(M<sup>rs</sup> L. P. Hermond)



23 October 1974

A. V. Starke  
Wombah  
Via Chatsworth Island  
New South Wales 2460

Dear Mr. Starke,

Thanks for your letter of 20 October on woodchipping. Paul Scobie, now Sydney Project Officer of the Australian Conservation Foundation, has given me a copy of his report on "The Australian Woodchipping Export Industry" for you and I also enclose a copy of Ecology Action's brochure "The Woodchip Tragedy". The poster has been published as part of the Tasmanian woodchip campaign.

Paul will be visiting the north coast for A.C.F. from 11-30 November and would appreciate the opportunity to talk with you and others concerned about environment problems on the north coast. Could you write to Paul at this address advising him of your telephone number and availability? Other contacts you could suggest would also be helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Leigh Holloway  
manager

copy: Paul Scobie

11-30

23 OCT 1974

O.I.C.

NSW Environment Centre

Wombah

via Chatsworth Lane

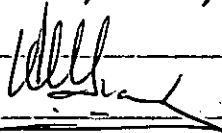
2460

20.10.74

Refer to para. in S.M.H of 19.10.74. In common with many other local residents I am greatly concerned with the possibility of a Wood-chip operation (Japanese controlled) being established at Inka. This is a small village situated at the north side of the entrance to the Clarence River - mainly fishing & tourism.

Naturally, a great deal of environmental destruction is envisaged & I would be greatly obliged if you could supply me with any data relevant to such projects to enable me to pursue an objection. Information on other projects at Eden & in Tasmania would be of interest. If possible, could you let me have this information as a matter of some urgency as a public meeting is scheduled for 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov.

Thanking you in anticipation  
yours faithfully,



(A.V. STARK)

NSWEC copy

9 DEC 1974

Total Environment Centre,  
18 Argyle Street,  
SYDNEY. 2000. Phone 27 4714  
December 4, 1974.

Nature Conservation Council of NSW,  
NSW Environment Centre,  
263b The Broadway,  
BROADWAY. 2007.

INVITATION TO URGENT MEETING REGARDING  
WOODCHIP PROPOSALS FOR NORTHERN N.S.W.

Your organisation is invited to send two representatives to a meeting of representatives of approximately 33 conservation organisations on Sunday, 15th December 1974.

The meeting will be held at Coff's Harbour. Advice of the precise meeting place will be forwarded in the next few days.

A decision to call the Coff's Harbour gathering was made at a meeting at the NSW Environment Centre called by Mr. Len Willan, Chairman of the Management Committee of the Centre and Chairman of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. It was unanimously resolved on the motion of Peter Maslen, seconded by Alan Catford: "That a meeting be called on 15th December in Coff's Harbour to seek co-operation with North Coast conservation groups on the urgent threat of the North Coast woodchip proposals".

It is hoped that the Coff's Harbour meeting might begin by pooling information regarding the woodchip proposals of the three Japanese companies and two Australian companies known to be involved. The meeting might then move on to discuss a common policy towards the proposals and a concerted plan of campaign.

The urgency and importance of this meeting cannot be too highly stressed. Information from Departmental sources and companies involved lead the writers to believe the promoters expect approval of their projects by the end of February.

We are highly critical of the timing of these applications and inquiries in the Christmas period when many conservation groups and Parliament are in recess.

The proposals, based on Coff's Harbour, Iluka and Pinkenbah, involve forested areas within 150 miles radius of each of those centres. Exports of the order of a million tons of woodchip per year are proposed initially.

Government reports such as the Development Report on the Richmond-Tweed Region already state that "the forest areas are now being overcut". The chip milling proposals go beyond overcutting - they threaten to destroy the forests of the North Coast and Northern Tablelands of NSW in the short term.

The invitation to meet at Coff's Harbour has been extended to 26 conservation groups on the North Coast and to 7 State or National groups. The seven groups are :

Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
 National Parks Association of NSW  
 The Australian Conservation Foundation  
 Ecology Action  
 The National Trust of Australia, New South Wales  
 Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia  
 Total Environment Centre

Each organisation has been asked to send two representatives. In view of the rush timetable of the chip milling projects, with submissions due to the general State Pollution Control Commission Inquiry by 31st December, and further specific inquiries to follow, it will be preferable for representatives to be given some power to commit their societies to a joint campaign. Thus, attendance of executive members of the society will be most appropriate. However, where this is not possible, societies are urged to send their representatives as observers.

Background material on the chip milling industry from Ecology Action and Total Environment Centre will be forwarded in the next few days. It is also hoped to forward reports from The Australian Conservation Foundation and the National Trust in time for the Coff's Harbour meeting.

Please advise the writer by mail or telegram of your representatives' names, phones, addresses and status at the meeting - whether representative or observer.

Yours sincerely,

*Milo Dunphy*

on behalf of  
 Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
 (incorporating over 50 societies)  
 Port Macquarie Conservation Society  
 Camden Haven Conservation Society  
 Byron Flora and Fauna Preservation Socy  
 National Parks Association of NSW  
 Ecology Action  
 The Australian Conservation Foundation  
 Total Environment Centre.

# THE CHIPS ARE DOWN FOR THE NORTH COAST

## WOODCHIP

### WHAT'S PLANNED ?

Many New South Wales North Coast towns and forests are threatened by these four woodchip export proposals:

Iuka 300 000 tonnes p.a. (Toyomenka & Nippon Pulp); Newcastle 259 000 tonnes p.a. (Toyomenka & Nippon Pulp); Coffs Harbour 350 000 tonnes p.a. (C. Itoh & Allen Taylor); Brisbane 500 000 tonnes p.a. (Carter Consolidated & Standard Sawmill).  
**NORTH COAST TOTAL 1.4 MILLION TONNES** of woodchips to be exported each year to Japan.

### WHAT ARE WOODCHIPS ?

Woodchips are shredded trees — small fragments of timber.

### WHAT WILL BE USED TO MAKE WOODCHIPS ?

Sawmill waste and forest residue.

### WHAT % OF SAWMILL WASTE IS SUITABLE FOR WOODCHIPS ?

Only 20 - 30% — Sawdust is not usable!

### WHAT IS FOREST RESIDUE ?

The Forestry Commission of N.S.W. says in their booklet "Woodchips from Eden" — "heads of some trees, from which the main stem has been removed as a sawlog; trees of excessively bad form or faultiness; such as are usually destroyed during timber stand improvement treatments."

### IS MILL WASTE AND FOREST RESIDUE ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A VIABLE INDUSTRY ?

Other Australian woodchip export proposals clearfell around 10 000 acres each year to provide the accepted economic minimum of 500 000 tonnes p.a. Despite claims that the North Coast woodchip proposals are dependent on sawmill waste, in fact their viability and expansion will depend heavily on taking timber from private forests, and on the N.S.W. Forestry Commission's "Routine Plantation Establishment". Government's cannot control clear-felling in the private forests which make up 44% of the forested land on the North Coast.

HOW can the North Coast proposals beat economic realities without asking future governments for permission to increase their export quotas by clear-felling the North Coast forests.

### WHAT IS CLEARFELLING ?

Stripping forests — i.e., razing almost all the trees over an extensive area. In order to extract all the wood, the forest is dissected into small blocks by a dense network of permanent roads. Clearing and burning may remove all surface vegetation. Usually much of the ground surface is disturbed by the movement of tracked vehicles, and there are many snigging tracks and heavily compacted log dumps.

### WHAT IS A FOREST ?

Is it a "wood-mine"?

Is it a source of exploitation and speculation?

We say it is **"AN INTEGRAL LINK IN THE WEB OF LIFE OF OUR CONTINENT"**.

### HOW MUCH FOREST DO WE HAVE ?

About 5.6% of Australia's land area is forested.

### WHERE ARE OUR FORESTS ?

Mainly in the more heavily populated coastal regions of the continent.

### WHAT DO FOREST SYSTEMS INFLUENCE ?

Local climate conditions.

Protect watersheds.

Prevent erosion.

Prevent nutrient loss through run-off.

Are the habitat of native fauna.

Root systems stabilise underground water tables and salinity levels.

Provide logs for the sawmill.

### LOGS FOR THE SAWMILL ?

Have been cut from Australian forests for more than 150 years — logging was normally by selection with suitable single trees or small groups being removed at a time and large quantities of material unsuitable for sawmilling remaining uncut in the forests.

### DOES SELECTIVE LOGGING ADVERSELY AFFECT FORESTS ?

The effect on vegetation and habitat of wildlife and diversity and attraction of forests is generally small.

### DOES CLEARFELLING ADVERSELY AFFECT FORESTS ?

YES !

Soil fertility declines through leaching of nutrients and erosion of soil service. Siltation occurs in water courses, rivers and lakes.

Floral species are depleted.

Fauna species are depleted.

There is a loss of scenic and recreational values. There is an increased risk of root rot (Phytophthora cinnamomi) due to soil disturbance and spread by forest vehicles.

I OPPOSE the issue of a woodchip export licence for the North Coast of New South Wales until suitable economic and environmental studies have been completed on both existing and proposed woodchip schemes and on the remaining forested areas of our coast.

NAME .....

ADDRESS, etc. ....

I would like to enclose a donation towards funds in the "Fight against Woodchip". Any sum is welcome. Please make payable to the North Coast Environment Centre. All donations will be receipted.

77 BOLD ST., LAURIETON

NAME .....

ADDRESS, etc. ....

#### TOTAL EFFECT :

Reduction in the structural diversity and stability of native forest communities.

#### WHERE ELSE COULD PINES BE PLANTED ?

On agricultural land or land which is **ALREADY** cleared of timber.

#### DOES WOODCHIPPING MEET OUR LOCAL NEEDS ?

Woodchipping supplies an export market.

#### WHERE DO OUR CHIPS GO ?

JAPAN.

#### WHAT PERCENTAGE OF JAPAN IS FORESTED ?

60%.

#### DOES JAPAN CHIP ITS OWN FORESTS ?

NO !

#### WHY NOT ?

Because they can use the Pacific Basin, i.e., Borneo, Java, Thailand, New Guinea, etc., and **AUSTRALIA** as a cellulose source.

#### WHAT FOLLOWS CHIP MILLS ?

Pulpwood mills.

#### WHAT DO PULPWOOD MILLS PRODUCE ?

Disposable packaging and **LARGE AMOUNTS OF POLLUTANTS.**

#### HAS JAPAN GOT PULPWOOD MILLS ?

Yes — The greatest economic gain in the woodchip export operation comes from the value added by pulp product manufacturing, but this remains at present firmly in Japanese hands.

#### WHY THEN ARE THE JAPANESE LOOKING TO AUSTRALIA TO BUILD PULP MILLS ?

Japan's pollution has already passed tolerable limits. Our economic gains will have to be balanced against the dreadful pollution the mills will cause.

#### WHO PAYS FOR WOODCHIPS TO BE EXPORTED TO JAPAN ?

YOU !

#### HOW ?

Taxpayers' public money is being used to subsidise the profits of privately owned timber companies. The Australian public pays for example for the repair and maintenance of roads damaged by woodchippers' heavy lorries, for the provision of other services, for costly regeneration attempts, for treatment of the effects of erosion, and for control of large bushfire prone areas, while local and overseas controlled companies concentrate on the profitable aspects.

Royalties should equal regeneration costs which should restore the forest to a satisfactory standard. Under existing woodchip schemes public expenditure on restoring woodchipped forests has exceeded public revenue obtained.

#### WHO WILL GAIN ?

1. Japanese industries.
2. Lucrative shipping contracts to move woodchips from Australia to Japan are wholly in Japanese hands.
3. A small number of local companies.
4. The Forestry Commission who favour establishment of the highly polluting but economically attractive woodpulp plants which Japan is rejecting.

#### WHO LOSES ?

The taxpayer — Who subsidises the industry.  
The fishing industry — because of pollution of rivers and foreshores.

The sawmilling and furniture industry because of destruction of Australia's meagre supply of hard woods.

The tourist industry — because of wanton destruction of some of the most scenic wilderness areas of Australia.

#### THE CHIPS ARE DOWN FOR THE NORTH COAST !

The future of our forests depends on you — please sign the form above and return to:—

77 BOLD ST., LAURIETON

2 JUN 1975

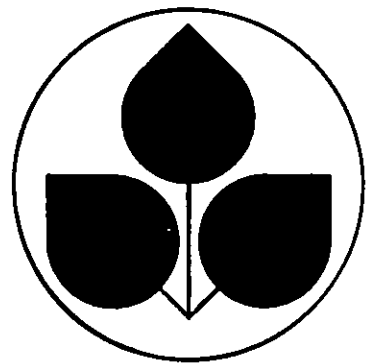
A SUBMISSION  
BY  
THE WILDERNESS PROTECTION COMMITTEE

TO THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION INTO  
ALLEN TAYLOR & COMPANY LIMITED  
WOODCHIP PROPOSAL

29TH MAY 1975

# news release

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION



206 Clarendon Street  
East Melbourne Victoria  
Australia 3002  
Telephone 419 3366

**ACF**

11 December 1974

The Australian Conservation Foundation today sent a telegram to the Australian Government urging rejection of an inadequate environmental impact study on New South Wales north coast woodchip proposals.

The Foundation also asked that any impact study on the proposals be made public documents for comment.

The telegram, which was addressed to the head of the Department of Environment and Conservation, Dr. D. McMichael, reflects the deep concern of conservationists over woodchip proposals in the Coff's Harbour area. Conservationists representing 100,000 members from thirty organisations will hold a special meeting at Coff's Harbour on 15 December to consider three woodchip export schemes.

The Societies include the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, the Port Macquarie Conservation Society, the Byron Flora and Fauna Conservation Society, the Camden-Haven Conservation Society and the National Parks Association of NSW. Also involved are Ecology Action and Total Environment Centre, successful campaigners against the Clutha Company and the AGL Blue Mountains Pipeline.

The three Japanese woodchip proposals would take timber from within a 150 mile radius of Coff's Harbour, Iluka, and Pinkenbah. Widespread reaction is building up throughout the north coast because chip milling destroys wildlife, damages local roads, increases fire hazards, discourages the saw-log industry, and destroys tourist potential of an area. Furthermore, soil erosion leading to siltation of catchment areas would have a detrimental effect on the fishing industry in the Clarence River region.



In the woodchip industry, sawmill waste utilised, thus avoiding loss and pollution by burning. However, this waste constitutes only thirty percent of the woodchip, the remaining 70% being taken from the forests.

Furthermore, the Japanese projects involve the use of mobile chippers which take logging residues from the forests, resulting not only in a massive loss of soil nutrients, but increases susceptibility of disease, with single aged forest stands greatly reduced in diversity.

A Project Officer with the Australian Conservation Foundation, Mr. Paul Scobie, has just completed a three week survey of areas proposed for chip milling on the north coast.

He said today: "the forests are already being slowly depleted by present forest activity. Chip milling, however, would accelerate this destruction tremendously. A rain forest, if continually over-exploited, cannot be regrown".

Mr. Scobie urged north coast residents to join their local conservation society, and to take an active part in any campaign to save the north coast forests.

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For any further information contact Bob Howard, Publicity Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation, Melbourne on Melbourne 419 3366; or Paul Scobie, Sydney Project Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation on Sydney 660 0960.

# PUBLIC REJECT WOODCHIP

The largest public meeting in Coffs Harbour for several years rejected woodchip proposals for northern NSW.

Five Japanese Companies have formed consortia with several Australian companies and ~~are~~ propose to export woodchips from Brisbane, Iluka, Coffs Harbour and Newcastle. 8 January,

Over 500 people at the Coffs Harbour Civic Centre meeting on Saturday evening voted to strongly resist establishment of the industry at Coffs Harbour.

Anti-woodchip action committees were set up by the meeting in the following centres:

Coffs Harbour  
Tannworth  
Armidale  
Mullumbimby  
Lamington  
Macleay and  
Port Macquarie

The meeting recognised that the forests of the North Coast of NSW are a valuable part of the National Heritage and must not be exploited for the short term benefit of a few.

Speakers were

• Mr Paul Scobie, Project Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation

• Mr. D. Brownrigg, Marketing Manager, Allen Taylor & Company

• Mr. Frank Walker, M.L.A., Member for Georges River

• Mr. Peter Metcalfe of the New England National Parks Trust

• Professor Ian Douglas of New England University, Department of Geography

Speakers from the floor included Mr. Matt Singleton MHA, and Coffs Harbour Councillors Hogbin, McHugh, & Robinson

The overwhelming rejection of woodchip proposals expressed by the meeting comes as a climax to weeks of debate in Coffs Harbour Shire Council.

One speaker from the floor drew from the representative of Allen Taylor & Company an admission that if the

Minister for Ag,

Senator Wreidt grants a woodchip export licence the company will proceed with its plans regardless of local public opinion. The company he said "had spent too much money on the project, not to".

The meeting was chaired by the Honorary Secretary of Ecology Action, Mr D Thompson.



# WOODCHIPS THE FACTS

**Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd. believe that the proposal for a woodchip industry based on Coffs Harbour demands the widest possible discussion.**

**The discussions to date which have been reported in these pages have tended to cloud some of the basic facts of the proposal.**

## THE BASIC FACTS ARE

- The Feasibility Study is still proceeding, although it is now in its final stages.
- There will be no Central Chipping Operation. Chipping will be done by small units at individual Sawmills or in the bush.
- The study is based on the utilisation of sawmill waste which is presently being burned. The Sawmilling Industry in the area must not waste wood if it is to remain competitive to sustain employment.
- There will be no clear felling of the forests as performed in other chip operations in Australia.
- The proposed operation will be small compared to other chip operations. The total tonnage would be 350,000 tons per annum, which volume should be achieved by Year 3 of the operation.
- No export of materials can be made until an Export Licence is issued by the Australian Government.
- The Wharf and Loading Installation will not interfere with the proposed Boat Launching Ramp.
- The export of wood products has always been a feature of our Sales Programme, so it follows that it is in the Company and Industry's interests to maintain the present Wharf facilities.
- Maritime Engineering Consultants advise that proposed dredging should not affect the contours of the harbour beach.
- The chip pile will be situated in the disused quarry, the base of the pile being 100ft. plus from the harbour foreshores.
- The quarry walls will protect the chip pile from wind forces, although the chips, by nature of their size, are relatively immobile.
- The loading of vessels with chips will be carried out by using a fully enclosed Belt Conveyor System.
- Water-runoff from the chip pile, containing very dilute leachates, is not dangerous to marine life and will be piped to and discharged at a point adjacent to the existing sewerage outfall.
- Access to the southern breakwater will be available by a road along the harbour foreshores.
- Vehicles conveying chips to chip pile will be adequately sheeted to preclude blow-off of chips.
- Vehicle movement through High Street will be increased by 0.8% by chip carrying vehicles, or an extra vehicle each 10 minutes. Flow in Orlando Street will be similar.
- We have to emphasise that our proposed Project will be of very great benefit in terms of increased income to a wide section of the community in Coffs Harbour Shire.
  - The town community, including Motel and Hotel businesses, will benefit by the constant flow of business people in and out of the town.
  - The Engineering Works in town will benefit by the fabrication and maintenance of equipment for Sawmills and Loading facilities.
  - The Automotive Industry will enjoy increased business both in vehicle repairs and maintenance as well as in the sale of fuel supplies.
  - The increased population will benefit the general business community.
  - Tourists will be attracted by the activity in the Port area as ships are seen to enter and leave the Port and tugs operate.

## ALLEN TAYLOR & COMPANY LIMITED

A MEMBER OF B.M.I. GROUP

120 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, COFFS HARBOUR

A message read to the meeting from the Queensland Conservation Council revealed that at least three Queensland ports - Brisbane, Gladstone and Maryborough are being considered as woodchip export ports.

Coloured slides were shown to the meeting of destruction and pollution caused by <sup>existing</sup> chip mill projects in Tasmania and at Eden in southern N.S.W. ←

Mr Scobie stated that two thirds of Tasmania was leased to woodchip companies

Allen Taylor's spokesman confirmed that there would be 150 movements of 20 ton trucks through Coff Harbour six days per week i.e. one truck every 10 minutes. Noise levels quoted for these movements were 80-100 decibels.

Mr. Frank Walker, M.A. told the meeting that his personal opinion was that an export woodchip industry on the North Coast would be a disaster. He said a flight over the Dawson-Harris franchise at Eden "should be compulsory for all those councillors and parliamentarians who have been duched by the expensive public relations campaigns being waged by the Japanese because their hearts would be sickened by the sight of devastation so ugly and so extensive that it could only be contrasted with the defoliated battlefields of Vietnam".

Mr Walker said North Coast woodchip proposals were the 'thin end of the wedge' leading to destruction of North Coast forests. "We have seen

this game played too often before,  
particularly by the mineral sands miners  
and the limestone miners. You get a  
toehold, make a local community  
dependant to some extent on the  
industry, and then blackmail it  
into submitting to widespread environmental  
degradation by threatening to close  
down and sack workers."



**MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
AND CONSERVATION**

18 DEC 1974

PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

13 DEC 1974

Dear Dr. Mosley,

I refer to your telegram to Dr. McMichael of 11 December 1974 on behalf of the Australian Conservation Foundation, concerning environmental issues associated with the various export woodchip proposals for the North Coast of New South Wales. I was also advised of your request for background information on the projects needed to prepare a response to the NSW Government investigation.

As you may be aware, three companies have put forward proposals: Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd., operating from Corfs Harbour, Toyomenka (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., operating from Iluka, and Standard Sawmilling Co. Pty. Ltd., operating from Brisbane. Arising from the division of responsibility, both the Australian and State Governments are required to make an assessment of the environmental implications of these proposals.

At the present time, I understand that the companies are preparing submissions for the environmental investigation being undertaken by the New South Wales State Pollution Control Commission. However, in view of our responsibility under the Customs (Prohibited Export) Regulations, my Department has been forwarded preliminary environmental information. I should emphasise that this information is neither final nor complete, but merely indicative of the proposed development. I would expect that, as a result of both the New South Wales investigation and our own later assessment, the proposals would undergo modification before being finally submitted for decision. Certainly the information so far received is inadequate and furthermore does not contain representative public comment. In my opinion, the situation on both these aspects will need to be remedied before any of the proposals are submitted to the Australian Government for a decision.

In regard to the question of public involvement, I would see the New South Wales investigations as the initial phase and would therefore hope that the public will respond to the Commission's invitation. I understand that the Commission is making relevant documents available to the public and I would suggest that you contact the Commission on this matter. In the interim, a copy of the Departmental

# the advocate

speaks for the district

Vol. LXXXIV No. 2379 Coffs Harbour, Monday, December 16, 1974 10c



BISHOP SATTERW

## Conservationists unite to oppose woodchip

Conservationists on the North Coast have united in an all-out attempt to stop establishment of a woodchip industry.

This follows an urgent telegram which will be sent today to the Federal Government by the National Conservation Foundation rejecting what is termed as an "inadequate environmental study on North Coast woodchip proposals."

The Foundation will also request any impact study on the proposals be made public. Conservationists from 30 societies met in Coffs Harbour yesterday to consider three woodchip export schemes.

The societies are the Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales, Port Macquarie Conservation Society, Byron Flora and Fauna Conservation and the National Parks Association of NSW. In a statement issued

by the Australian Conservation Foundation after the seminar it was claimed three Japanese-backed woodchip proposals planned to take timber from a 250 kilometre radius of Coffs Harbour, Iluka and Pinkenbah.

A field officer with the ACF, Mr. P. Scobie, said widespread reaction was building up throughout the North Coast because chip milling destroyed wildlife.

He said a woodchip industry also discouraged a saw-log industry and destroyed the tourist potential of an area.

"The industry could also lead to soil erosion causing siltation of our inland areas," Mr. Scobie said.

"This will have a detrimental affect on the tourism industry, particularly in the Clarence River Region," he said.

Mr. Scobie said the woodchip industry utilised sawmill waste.

However, the waste constituted only 30 per cent of woodchips.

The remaining 70 per cent came from forest areas, he said.

The Japanese projects involved the use of mobile chippers which took logging residues from forests.

This resulted not only in massive loss of soil nutrients, but increased the possibility of disease.

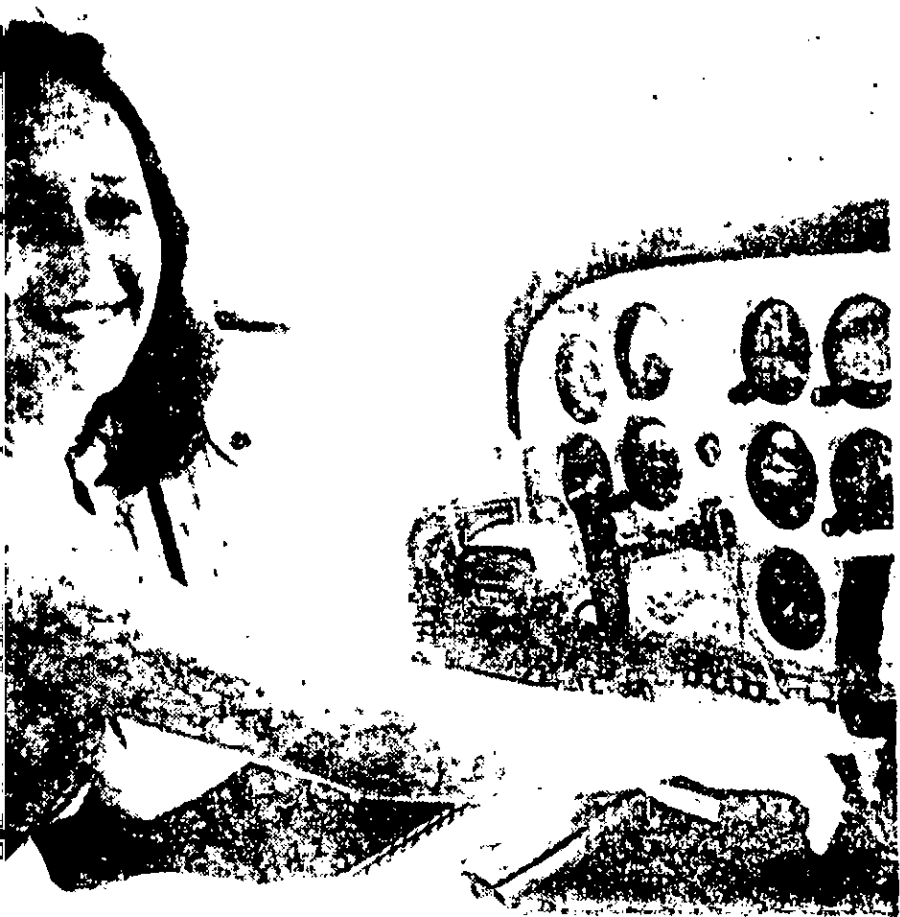
Mr. Scobie claimed forests were already being slowly depleted by present forest activity.

He said chip milling would tremendously accelerate the destruction of forests.

From the latest Forestry Commission figures, saw-log production in the Coffs Harbour area will be reduced by 60 per cent over the next 40 years, Mr. Scobie said.

"Certain areas are already being over cut," he said.

"It appears as if the companies involved will clear up and then try to meet and maintain their overseas contracts."



## THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL

ACRES GENUINE VINDORS  
10 ACRES (7 acres bananas), packing shed, Land-Ro  
DAM, STREAM. Good homelife with sea views. Fax  
and so is the price:-

ONLY \$16,000

ALSO

25 ACRES, 13 acres beautiful grassland, 12 acres trees  
plus new 3 BR home for—  
ONLY \$25,000



# What's planned

Many New South Wales North Coast towns and forests are threatened by these four woodchip export proposals:—

Iuka 300,000 tonnes per annum.

(Toyomenka and Nippon Pulp.)

Newcastle 259,000 tonnes p.a.

(Toyomenka and Nippon Pulp.)

Coffs Harbour 350,000 tonnes p.a. (C. Itoh and Allen Taylor.)

Brisbane 500,000 tonnes p.a. (Carter Consolidated and Standard Sawmill.)

North Coast total 1.4 million tonnes of woodchips to be exported each year to Japan.

At best sawmills could only supply 30% of these woodchips since the 1.4 million tonnes is greater than the total sawlog production on the North Coast, which is 1.2 million tonnes p.a. and will drop 54% in the next 40 years, because today the forests are being overcut.

## Don't be

## FOOLED

The Coffs Harbour Advocate has already shown that 89% of its readers want the shore for tourist and recreational use, not for heavy industries.

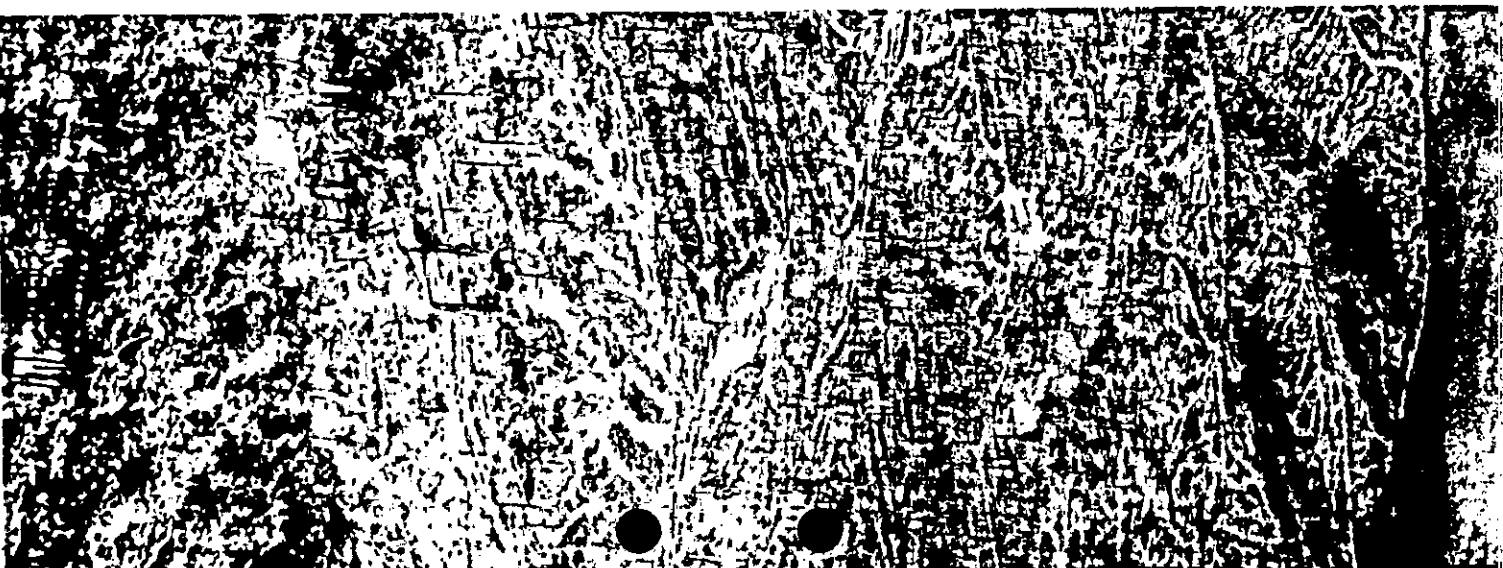
A professional opinion poll, by Australianwide Opinion Polls, showed 74% Tasmanians knew that the woodchip industries were causing "irreversible damage" or realised, that despite short time advantages, "long term problems will arise".

Governments cannot control clearfelling in the private forests which make up 44% of the forested land on the North Coast.

Other Australian woodchip export proposals clearfell around 10,000 acres each year to provide the accepted economic minimum of 500,000 tonnes p.a.

How can these North Coast proposals beat economic realities without asking future governments for permission to increase their export quotas by clearfelling the North Coast Forests?

Don't be fooled. The present proposals are the thin end of the wedge.



Woodchip extraction

# Employment

Tourism brings \$14 million p.a. to the Coffs Harbour region alone and the NSW Department of Tourism expects this to grow at 10% p.a. The Richmond Tweed regional development committee state that "Tourist activity in the Richmond Tweed is the main single way to compensate for the decline in the dynamics of its key industry of dairying".

A report prepared by an economics graduate for Total Environment Centre revealed that creating a National Park instead of logging Wiangare State Forest would generate from 3 to 8 times the income stimulus to the region.

The North Coast Woodchip industry offers to employ only 0.25% of the workforce whereas a tourist industry using a properly managed national park system could employ up to 2% more of the workforce.

## Damage

In Coffs Harbour alone a **TWENTY TON TRUCK** will go through the town every ten minutes. In Tasmania these trucks have caused such damage and danger on local roads that the local councils were awarded compensation of 1.2c per ton mile from the woodchippers.

Large scale woodchip extraction will increase the runoff, resulting in more severe floods, muddy waters filling up river beds with sediment, destroying weed beds, fish nurseries, and generally decreasing the productivity of the estuary.

North Coast forests harbour the largest and most dense population of koalas in NSW (and probably Australia). Shooting, disease and forest clearing has reduced koala populations drastically in the past 100 years. Woodchip proposals will further endanger koalas, one of Australia's most famous animals. Other wildlife will also suffer.

Only 3% of North Coast forests are protected in Parks. Of the 24 forest types on the Coast, 45% are not conserved at all. The community needs a proper system of forest and national parks where people can camp, walk, drive and recreate in peace, and they are prepared to pay far more than can be made from woodchipping.

# Make YOUR Feelings Known

A Public Meeting on Woodchipping will be held at the Coffs Harbour Civic Centre, 8 pm, Saturday, 8 February, 1975. Speakers will include politicians, a representative of the woodchip industry, and conservationists. The meeting has been called by 30 local and 6 major conservation societies.

We recommend that you contact your local Members of Parliament and local councillors to have a proper National Park system established instead of the woodchip industry.

Write to newspapers.

Write to the Premier, Mr. Lewis.

Take up a petition.

Join your local conservation group.

Vote for conservation minded representatives.

Pass on this leaflet.

The Australian Conservation Foundation published this leaflet. More copies and detailed information is available from ACF, c/- NSW Environment Centre, 2638 The Broadway, Broadway, NSW 2007, Telephone (02) 6607735.

OR TELEPHONE Mrs Grace Eastbrock, Port Macquarie 831804; Don Wattus, Yamba 179, Rus Maslen, Mullumbimby 370; Jill Diwock, Laurieton 59-9026; Peter Marcalfo, Armidale 75-1165; Robert Prater, Tamworth 65-9158; Peter Roberts, Coffs Harbour 52-1412.

Woodchip facilities — Eden



North Coast rainforest

# N.S.W. NORTH COAST

## Woodchips or Recreation ?



## AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

ANNOUNCEMENT for your information

24 January 1975

### THE CASE AGAINST WOODCHIP EXPORTS

The Australian Conservation Foundation will launch a new booklet in its Viewpoint series next week.

The booklet, entitled "The Great Forest Sell-out", puts the case against the woodchip export industry.

The ACF believes the booklet will make a significant contribution to the sane conservation of the Australian environment. It sets certain criteria of assessment and development and urges all those who make decisions on new woodchip proposals to apply these criteria.

The booklet will be launched in both Melbourne and Sydney. The Director of the ACF, Dr. J G Mosley, will launch the booklet at the ACF headquarters in Melbourne, and a Vice President of ACF, Mr. Milo Dunphy, will launch the Viewpoint at the Foundation's Sydney Project Office (in the NSW Environment Centre).

Dr. Mosley warns in a foreword that under the woodchip export industry "the wild forests which have never been used for wood production and the forests which have been lightly affected for selective logging are threatened with virtual extinction".

The woodchip industry is just reaching the editorial pages of the national press. (See The Australian page 9 Thursday 23 January - Chipping away at the national heritage by Ian Moffit).

Time 11-30 am Tuesday, 28 January

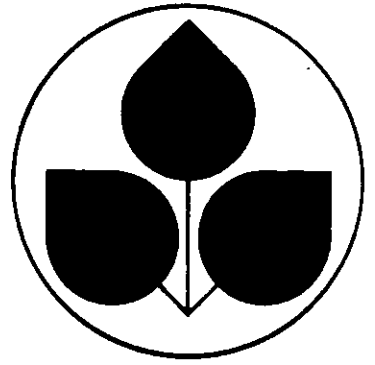
Place New South Wales Environment Centre  
263b The Broadway  
Broadway, NSW 2007

Your representative/representatives would be very welcome.

Telephone enquiries Leigh Holloway  
660 7735

# news release

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION



206 Clarendon Street  
East Melbourne Victoria  
Australia 3002  
Telephone 419 3366

**ACF**

## NORTH COAST - Woodchips or Recreation?

The Australian Conservation Foundation and thirty-five N.S.W. local conservation groups have called four public meetings on the North Coast.

The four woodchip proposals on the North Coast plan to export to Japan 1.4 million tonnes of forest each year.

Mr. Paul Scobie, Project Officer with the A.C.F. said "In Coffs Harbour alone a twenty ton truck will go through the town every ten minutes".

The Coffs Harbour Advocate has already shown that 89% of its readers want the shore for tourist and recreational use, not for heavy industry. Mr. Scobie also stated "that Government and private reports indicate that North Coast Woodchip industries offer to employ only 0.25% of the workforce, whereas a tourist industry, using a properly managed national park system, could employ up to 2% more of the workforce".

Tourism brings \$14 million per annum to the Coffs Harbour region alone and the N.S.W. Department of Tourism expects this to grow at 10% p.a.

The A.C.F. believes that large scale woodchip extraction will increase runoff, resulting in more severe floods, and muddy waters that fill river beds with sediment, choking weed beds and fish nurseries. This will adversely affect sports fishing and one of Australia's major fishing industries.

.../ ..

# NORTH COAST - Woodchips or Recreation?

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With only 3% of North Coast forests protected in National Parks the Australian Conservation Foundation believes the community need the North Coast forests for recreation not woodchips.

-----

The first public meeting is to be held on Tuesday, 28th January at 7.30 pm in Laurieton Public School.

Then on Thursday, 30th January, 7.30 pm in the Maclean Civil Hall and another on Friday, 31st January at 7.30 pm in the Cook Pioneer Centre, Mullumbimby.

A video film and slide show on the effects of woodchipping will be shown at these meetings.

The final public meeting is to be held on Saturday 8th February at 7.00 pm., Civic Centre Coffs Harbour.

-----

For further information please contact :

- Leigh Holloway
- or - Paul Scobie, Sydney Project Officer,  
Australian Conservation Foundation,  
263b The Broadway,  
Broadway, N.S.W. 2007  
Telephone : 02 660-7735

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ANNOUNCEMENT for your information

24 January 1975

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Place New South Wales Environment Centre  
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Broadway, NSW 2007

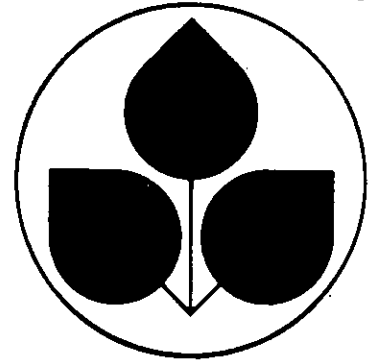
Your representative/representatives would be very welcome.

Telephone enquiries Leigh Holloway  
660 7735

24 JAN 1975

# news release

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION



206 Clarendon Street  
East Melbourne Victoria  
Australia 3002  
Telephone 419 3366

**ACF**

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

January 22, 1975

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THE TIME: 11.30 a.m., Tuesday, January 28.

THE PLACE: The Australian Conservation Foundation,  
206 Clarendon Street,  
East Melbourne, 3002.

Your representative/representatives would be very welcome.

R.J.W. Howard,  
Public Relations Manager.

SUBMISSION TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROPOSED  
WOODCHIP INDUSTRY FOR THE NORTH COAST OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

BY

THE N.S.W. FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS  
(herein referred to as FBW)

REPRESENTING

24 AFFILIATED CLUBS IN URBAN AND RURAL N.S.W.

AND THENCE

approx. 3000 MEMBERS OF AFFILIATED CLUBS  
(herein referred to as bushwalkers)

in respect of the following activities:

BUSHWALKING

CANOEING

SKITOURING

CAVEING

ROCKCLIMBING

*Murray Scott*  
Murray Scott

Conservation Secretary.

1975-01-06

Held on behalf of  
NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs.



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2. Scientific Reference Areas - Axioms and Assumptions	p7
3. Wilderness Recreation Areas - Axioms and Assumptions	p8

# 1 COMMENTS ON THE IMPACT OF THE WOODCHIP INDUSTRY.

## 1.0 Sources of Chipwood

Existing and proposed woodchip operations in N.S.W. appear to be based on three nominally distinct sources of timber. The following comments are grouped under these sources.

### 1.1 Chipmilling of sawmill residues.

In so far as it utilizes material hitherto burned, this operation has obvious economic and environmental benefits, which however must be weighed against the following considerations:

#### 1.11 Sustainability

The volume of sawmill residues is likely to decline in future with the reduction in timber yield from privately owned land. The establishment of an industry based on this source inevitably implies future labour redundancy, creating unemployment and/or irresistible pressures to reflate the operation with timber from other sources.

#### 1.12 Overall utilization of sawmill waste

Only part of existing sawmill residues can be converted to woodchips. Before capital is invested in chipmilling this fraction the economics of utilizing the remainder, mainly sawdust should also be explored, covering such possibilities as:

- 1.121 modification of sawing techniques to produce usable chips instead of sawdust
- 1.122 possible outlets for sawdust and offcuts in combination
- 1.123 sawdust utilization for pulp, chemical feedstock, fuel etc.

### 1.13 Port Development

The development of deepwater port facilities in Coff's Harbour for example could be anticipated to incur the following negative impacts on the tourist industry and the amenity of local residents:

- 1.131 Heavy vehicular traffic in and around the town, with consequent accident risk and deterioration of roads.
- 1.132 Water pollution due to ballast from bulk ships and dust from loading operations
- 1.133 Noise
- 1.134 Beach and foreshore erosion due to dredging of the channel.

### 1.2 Chipmilling of Forest Residues.

From details enclosed in a letter from A.C. Hogarth of ALLEN TAYLOR & CO. to M. Dunphy, dated 1974-11-20, the term "forest residues" is understood to mean:

- Category 1) Residual material after logging of native forest
- 2) Residual material cleared annually from  
plantation areas.
- 3) Pulpwood from regrowth areas

With the possible exception of Category 3), which may refer to thinnings, it appears that the material to be chipmilled is not 'waste' in the sense of slash and crowns left to rot, but live trees unsuitable for sawmilling. The definitions of categories 1) and 2) "forest residues" implies an operation in which all trees are removed from an area, an operation indistinguishable from clearfelling.

1.3 Chipmilling of clearfelled timber

- 1.30 Of all the implications of a woodchip industry, the clearfelling of native forests prior to conversion to agriculture or silvicultural plantations represents the point of gravest concern to the FBW.
- 1.31 We hold layman's misgivings about the sustainability of clearfelling as an intensive forestry technique, on the grounds of:
- 1.311 soil erosion after clearfelling
  - 1.312 nutrient depletion due to soil erosion and complete removal of vegetation
  - 1.313 vulnerability of even aged monocultures to pest, disease and fire.
- On these technical matters we defer to the research results of professional foresters, but we cannot accept that such research is adequate until trial plots have been observed for several harvest cycles. As a form of agriculture, plantation clearfelling appears no more or less hazardous than cereal farming or burnt range grazing. Experience in the latter areas has however indicated the need for caution before large tracts of land are committed to unproven management techniques.
- 1.32 The primary concern of the FBW is not with the long term profitability of plantation silviculture, but that the expansion of this form of land use is almost entirely at the expense of native forest. The concept of "multiple use" management encompassing wildlife conservation and recreation as well as timber production is utterly inconsistent with conversion of native forest to plantations harvested by clearfelling.

1.33        The FBW considers that if plantation silviculture is to expand it should do so in competition to other forms of agriculture, on land already denuded of native forest. The traditionally privileged position of the forestry industry as trustees of most of the remaining wilderness areas of NSW, cannot be justified when the terms of that trust are violated by the practice of clearfelling.

2 SCIENTIFIC REFERENCE AREAS - AXIOMS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- 2.1 Perpetually viable samples of all remaining natural habitats should be secured for the purpose of scientific reference.
- 2.2 The existing N.S.W. system of nature reserves, flora and fauna reserves and scientific areas falls far short of a comprehensive sample of remaining natural habitats, and many such habitats will be destroyed unless interim protection is afforded to likely areas pending further research.
- 2.3 Of the remaining habitat types to be sampled for scientific purposes a large proportion are forest habitats centred on the coastal ranges.
- 2.4 The integrity of scientific reference areas is incompatible with any form of timber production
- 2.5 The concept of perpetual reservation implies overriding priority over other competing forms of land use.

### 3 WILDERNESS RECREATION AREAS - AXIOMS AND ASSUMPTIONS.

- 3.1 Further to the system of scientific reserves, and second only to that in priority, sustainably manageable samples of all outstanding natural features, including the remaining wilderness areas should be secured for public recreation and enlightenment.
- 3.2 The areas dedicated for public recreation must be adequate to cater for N.S.W.'s share of the projected recreation needs of the ultimate population of Australia, without degradation of natural values, especially in the wilderness component.
- 3.3 Of the remaining areas of N.S.W. manageable for wilderness recreation, the overwhelming majority are forests.
- 3.4 The community demand for recreational land covers a wide spectrum from wilderness to racetracks. The FBW seeks to represent only the wilderness end of that spectrum, involving land in which the only improvements are occasional tracks and fireplaces to protect the area from damage by visitors.
- 3.5 The values sought in an area through the activities represented by FBW are :
- 3.51 Wilderness credibility, maximum in the absence of all roads, tracks, structures, fireplaces etc., though these are invariably used when present.
- 3.52 Natural history; geology, ecology, botany, zoology based on the same considerations as scientific reference areas. People need a personal reference to the way it was.
- 3.53 Solitude, freedom from encounters with people other than friends.
- 3.54 Scenery
- 3.55 Challenge, not necessarily danger, but scope for skill and physical fitness.

3.6 The impact of conventional selective logging operations on the values outlined above stems from the following effects:

3.61 Logging and fire roads reduce wilderness credibility, degrade the natural history by altering catchment runoff and penetrating the forest canopy; increase the mobility of motorized visitors, which impairs the solitude value to others; scar the view; and drastically reduce the size of roadless areas posing any meaningful challenge to bushwalkers.

3.62 Noise of chainsaws and logging equipment destroy wilderness credibility and drive off wildlife.

3.63 Exotic weeds introduced by earthmoving equipment and encouraged by the opening of the forest canopy impair the natural history, and in some cases completely destroy the natural understorey.

3.7 The impact of clearfelling and planting on recreational values is even more devastating, and includes the following factors:

3.71 Even age of timber stands implies that the area even vaguely resembles a forest for only about one third of the time. Lack of "degenerate" old trees implies the absence of arboreal animals and several species of birds.

3.72 Reduction of diversity especially the destruction of irreplaceable rainforest habitats completely destroys the natural history value of an area, except perhaps as a macabre contrast to the original environment.

3.73 Domestication of the area with trees planted in rows, and a network of access roads utterly destroys wilderness credibility.

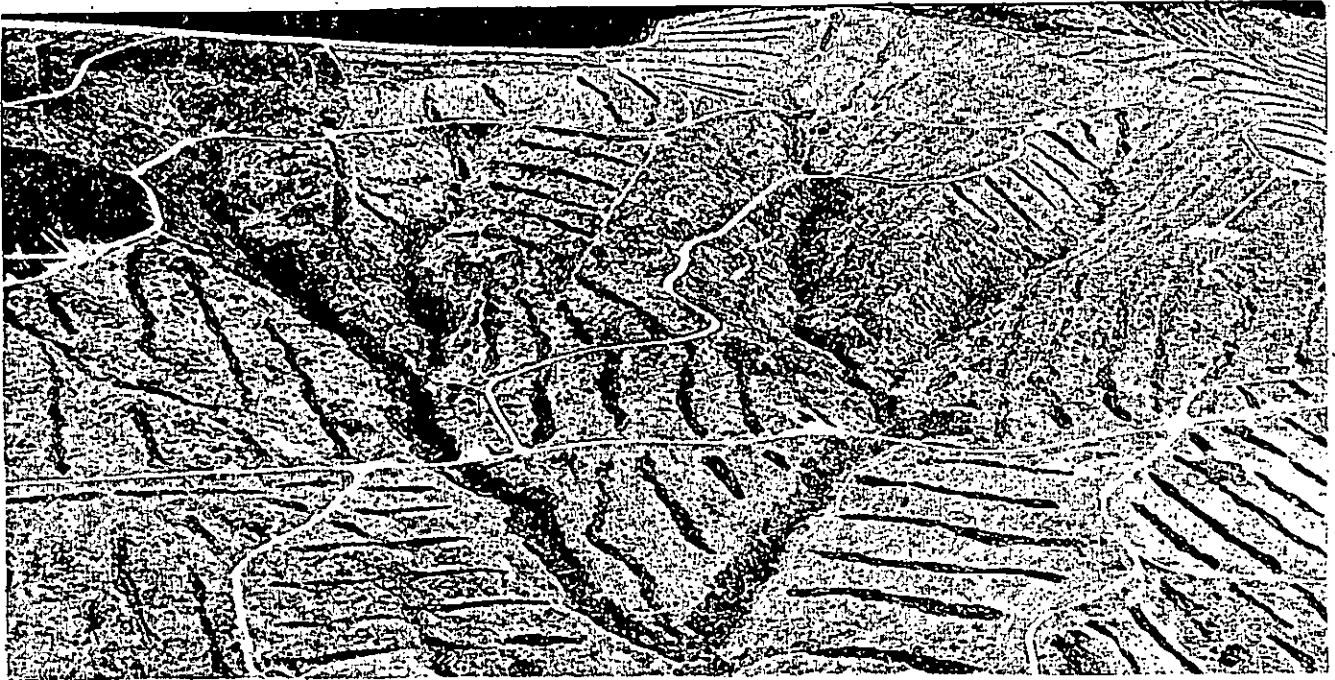




CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS

# WOODCHIPS

## the facts.



### THE N.S.W. FORESTRY COMMISSION'S MANAGEMENT OF TALLAGANDA STATE FOREST

- increased erosion and nutrient loss, wildlife slaughter, expensive roading, watercourse pollution and siltation, the use of harmful clearfelling practices, loss of forest amenity, increased problems and cost of management, destruction of opportunities for multiple forest use.

The N.S.W. Forestry Commission claims that it is involved in the new woodchip proposals in only "a very marginal way". However it has already offered woodchippers material from its clearfelling activities — so

called "sites being cleared for routine plantation establishment".

The Commission favours the establishment of the highly polluting woodpulp plants which Japan is rejecting. If the new woodchip schemes are established they can be expected to lead to pulpmills, which would require the establishment of intensive tree plantations, in the place of native forest, to supply adequate raw material.

## The thin edge of the wedge

The current woodchip proposals, incorrectly claimed to be primarily based on sawmill waste, are merely "the thin edge of the wedge". These proposals, under present plans, will inevitably lead to the establishment of highly polluting wood

pulp processing plants, and lead to the clearing of much of the native forest of central and northern N.S.W., and of southern Queensland.

### WOODCHIPS — THE FACTS

This is a special publication for residents of the central and north coasts of N.S.W., and of the northern tablelands, and for all who care for the future of the north eastern area of the State.

The publication contains details of four current woodchip proposals. They are the thin edge of the woodchip-pulp wood wedge which will shatter the environment of this area.

Implementation of the proposed schemes will bring large scale clear-felling of native eucalypt and rain forest, restrict

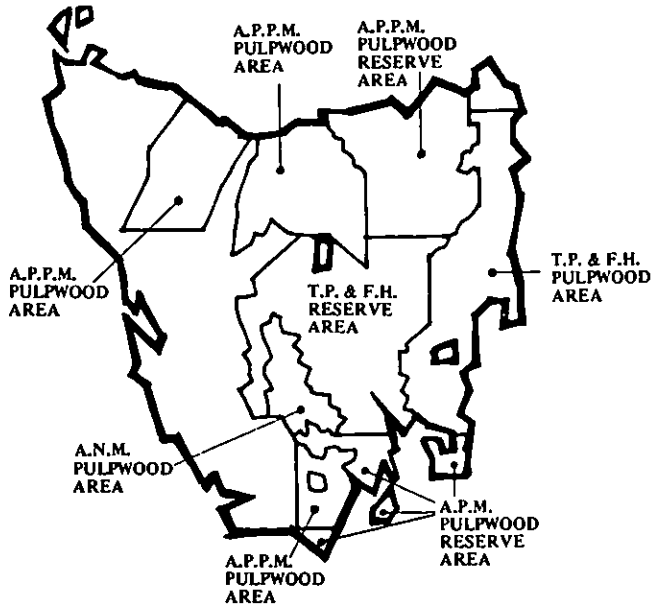
employment opportunities, destroy living and recreation amenity, in time render commercial fishing uneconomic, take raw materials away from the saw-log industry, absorb ten's of millions of dollars of public funds, block growth of the tourist industry and destroy much of the existing road system.

The Australian community will have to suffer all this simply to boost the profits of Japanese industry, and of a small number of local companies.

## THE TASMANIAN LESSON

The people of the N.S.W. central and north coasts, and of southern Queensland can judge their future from the experience of Tasmanians.

They were largely unaware that woodchipping would cause erosion, spread forest disease, break up roads, affect tourist amenities, and destroy valuable saw logs — and even then, would require massive injections of public money to enable it to operate.



The result of "the thin edge of the wedge" approach — 2/3 of Tasmania, including its best forests, is given over to intensive woodchip activity.

### POOR DEAL FOR PRIVATE LAND HOLDERS

Woodchip companies in Tasmania were relying in some areas on private forested land for supplies of timber.

On 4 July 1973 Mr. R.F. Thomas, Chairman of the State Forestry Committee of the Tasmanian Farmers' Federation, addressed the Federation's annual State conference. He said that the woodchip industry had "turned sour" for farmers.

"It is disappointing to find that after we have given the chip companies our support and blessing and arranged procedures, that they appear to have thrown the book away." He went on to say that royalties paid by the companies did not enable forests to be re-established, and that good timber was wasted.

The Hobart 'Mercury' in its July 6, 1973 editorial commented on Mr. Thomas' anti-woodchip remarks, "The industry appears another case of Government enthusiasm for something big and new overriding the need for thorough preliminary investigation of its effects."

### CITIZENS OBJECT

On July 5, 1973 the Tasmanian press carried this 'Letter to the Editor',

"Sir, — Another sawmill is to be closed and men paid off because of the scarcity of timber logs.

Yet daily trucks pass through Launceston ruining our roads, and shaking our houses, carrying logs many of which are fit for sawmilling

Yes, our farmers were offered 50c a ton for these

wonderful Tasmanian hardwoods to be chipped, and yet our firewood is scarce. The City Mission is unable to supply our poor with firewood.

In a few years Tasmania will be barren. Our children will have lost their heritage, and our glorious forests will be deserts.

The only good news I have heard is that one firm was not granted a chip licence. . ."

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT OBJECTS

On March 14, 1973 the Tasmanian press reported criticism of woodchip activity by the Mayor of Launceston (Dr. Fisher). Dr. Fisher's comments joined those of other local government authorities worried by the cost of maintaining roads, wrecked and made dangerous by woodchip lorries.

Dr. Fisher said that in the early stages of the woodchip industry, he had warned that the states forests would be denuded.

"I pointed out that there was no control on reafforestation of private land. I felt this was a great tragedy.

I was told I was speaking through my hat.

I am now very pleased to note that the former Premier, and former minister for Agriculture are now advocating the very thing that I have advocated.

I also made the statement that a lot of logging timber was going to the woodchip industry, and obviously I have been right because at the moment there is a big outcry from the timber merchants."

### INDUSTRY SPOKESMAN

However the situation continued to deteriorate. On June 1, 1973 in a Letter to the Editor, Mr. Brendan A. Lyons, Manager of the Tasmanian Timber Association spoke of the destruction of saw logs in the Derwent valley.

"In that Crown area, which carries probably the world's best stands of hardwood milling timber, Australian Newsprint mills are given by Act of Parliament the exclusive right to all logs regardless of quality.

The company is required only to sell a certain volume per annum to saw millers and is then entitled to use all other sawlogs for pulp, and it does in fact do so.

Further it pays an extremely low royalty for them.

My association is extremely concerned at this dreadful waste. This is happening while sawmillers are being forced to use logs of quality more suited for pulpwood (i.e. woodchips) than for sawn timber."

### SAWMILLS CLOSE, STAFF SACKED

On June 29, 1973 the Tasmanian press carried this story.

"Four years ago Leo Faulkner was thinking about expanding his sawmill but today he's on the verge of closing down because he can't get any logs.

Mr. Faulkner (53) of Walkers Ave, Newham, blames woodchip companies for his predicament.

He will lay off his six employees this afternoon after his last few logs have been cut.

And that will be the end of 40 years work in sawmills for Mr. Faulkner.

"The woodchip companies have got everything tied up and there is no way a mill like mine can operate," Mr. Faulkner said.

"They have virtually forced me out of business'.

"I know people say that the chip plants don't take good logs but I've been in the game for 40 years and I know a good log when I see one."

## TO — CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS

Please send a copy of this publication and other relevant details of the CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS to the following people/organisations. You may indicate that I

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr

Surname .....

First Name or Initials .....

Address .....

Postcode .....

suggested you forward the material. Enclosed is a stamp for each address.

Signed

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr

Surname .....

First Name or Initials .....

Address .....

Postcode .....

Please attach additional names if you wish PLEASE COMPLETE OTHER SIDE

## WOODCHIPS — THE FACTS ABOUT ALLEN TAYLOR & CO. LTD'S PROPOSALS

Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd. claim to believe "that the proposal for a woodchip industry based on Coffs Harbour demands the widest possible discussion".

But in reality —

- \* they have not given the public adequate information,
- \* Allen Taylor's Japanese partners in the proposed exploitation are notably absent from public debate,
- \* and the "basic facts" that they offer the public contain items which are seriously misleading.

Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd.'s public relations claims include —

- \* There will be no Central Chipping Operation. Chipping will be done by small units at individual Sawmills or in the bush.

However the public roads for up to 150 miles, and possibly as far as 250 miles, from Coffs Harbour will be broken up by heavy woodchip lorries delivering chips from sawmills, and forestry operations including clear felling.

- \* The study is based on the utilisation of sawmill waste which is presently being burned. The Sawmilling Industry in the area must not waste wood if it is to remain competitive to sustain employment.

The Allen Taylor proposals and the other schemes cannot be established and maintained on a basis of sawmill waste. Already Allen Taylor and Co. has been reported as saying that its projected woodchip exports have been increased from 350,000 tonnes to 500,000 tonnes and that only 200,000 of this could come from sawmill waste.

"... the dreaming tourist is threatened by the juggernaut behind, 20 tons of timber at 50 mph, engulfing, threatening all.

The big Macks thunder through the slalom course, breaking down the shoulders of the road, bumping stone walls into oblivion, fouling creek crossings farther into the hills, delivering once fine tall eucalypts to the mincer, and on to Japan."

— The Age, January 22, 1974

(Describing the transport of woodchip material from the forests to Triabunna (Tasmania) for export to Japan.)

The majority of their raw material would come from private forests, and from widespread N.S.W. Forestry Commission operations

Rather than the Sawmilling Industry remaining competitive and sustaining employment, it will become increasingly uneconomic as woodchip operations take quality sawlogs from public and private land (please see "The Tasmanian Lesson" on the back page).

- \* There will be no clear felling of the forests as performed in other chip operations in Australia.

The N.S.W. Forestry Commission claims that it will only be involved in the proposed schemes "in a very marginal way". This is quite wrong. It has already offered Allen Taylor and Co. "currently unsalable material on sites being cleared for routine plantation establishment". That is, the Commission will be clear felling extensive areas of native eucalypts, and residual pockets of rainforest, to establish tree crops of pines, and of single species eucalypts.

- \* The proposed operation will be small compared to other chip operations. The total tonnage would be 350,000 tons per annum, which volume should be achieved by Year 3 of the operation.

The thin edge of the wedge — already Allen Taylor have been reported to have increased this figure to 500,000 tons per annum — even this increased figure appears to be only a minimum acceptable figure for Japanese buyers.

- \* The chip pile will be situated in the disused quarry, the base of the pile being 100ft plus from the harbour foreshores.
- \* The quarry walls will protect the chip pile from wind forces, although the chips, by nature of their size, are relatively immobile.
- \* The loading of vessels with chips will be carried out by using a fully enclosed Belt Conveyor System.
- \* Water runoff from the chip pile, containing very dilute leachates, is not dangerous to marine life and will be piped to and discharged at a point adjacent to the existing sewerage outfall.

Already the increase in Allen Taylor's projected exports makes these assurances meaningless. In fact not only does the N.S.W. Forestry Commission actively encourage the expansion of woodchip exports, the Commission advocates the establishment of highly polluting pulp mills to process woodchips prior to export.

Such a logical and expected extension of Allen Taylor's proposed operation would destroy Coffs Harbour as its residents know it. It would certainly end its present commercial fishing activity and attraction for most tourists.

Mr. J. Henry, the N.S.W. Forestry Commissioner, is involved in the Australian Forestry Council which organised the recent Forwood Conference. The Conference's official research publication contained recommendations that Australia should seek to attract Japanese pulp mills by having weaker pollution controls.

- \* Access to the southern breakwater will be available by a road along the harbour foreshores.
- \* Vehicles conveying chips to chip pile will be adequately sheeted to preclude blow-off of chips.
- \* Vehicle movement through High Street will be increased by 0.8% by chip carrying vehicles, or an extra vehicle each 10 minutes. Flow in Orlando Street will be similar.

The proposed export tonnage has already been increased to up to 500,000 tonnes per annum. This will mean 250 single truck trips per day by heavy lorries of a 20 ton capacity, on the shire's roads, and on main highways.

Such disruption could destroy the viability of Coffs Harbour's commercial area through which the trucks will pass.

The noise and air pollution alone would be severe and would add to the noise and water pollution from the woodchip storage and loading operation.

- \* We have to emphasise that our proposed Project will be of very great benefit in terms of increased income to a wide section of the community in Coffs Harbour Shire.

Tourism and recreation activity, one of the area's growth industries, will be seriously affected, and lose the town income.

In addition because woodchip activities are capital, not labour, intensive the prospects for a net increase in employment are not good — tourist activities and related employment will not increase, saw mills will become less economic and put off staff, and increasing pollution will force fishing activities from the area.

Undoubtedly some individuals and businesses in the town will benefit — and no doubt residents are assessing just who will benefit from the proposed scheme.

For the majority of residents there will be no benefit. In fact their rates and taxes will have to pay for the cost of repairs to roads broken up by the trucks, and they will also have to pay for resulting damage to their own vehicles.

As in the case of many environmentally damaging projects the benefits are concentrated in a very small group of individuals or companies. The costs, both in cash and in loss of living amenity, are however borne by the whole community who gain little or no benefit.

Surely Allen Taylor & Co Ltd must want the public to correctly understand their plans and motivations. We hope that they will make the fullest details available to clarify any misunderstandings that have arisen.

## WHAT ARE WOODCHIPS AND PULPWOOD?

Woodchips are shredded trees – small fragments of timber. They are an early stage in the conversion of wood to pulp for the manufacture of paper and paperboard (cardboard). That is, the woodchip industry is part of the pulpwood (paper and paper products) industry.

These industries have a great environmental impact because they consume large amounts of water, wood and power, and produce large quantities of pollutants.

## THE WOODCHIP PROPOSALS

There are at least four woodchip schemes currently proposed for the central and north coasts of N.S.W. and for southern Queensland.

- \* Allen Taylor & Co. Ltd., and C. Itoh & Co. Ltd. (exporting from Coffs Harbour)
- \* Standard Sawmilling Co. Pty. Ltd., and Carter Consolidated Ltd. (exporting from Pinkenba Wharf, Brisbane)
- \* Toyomenka (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., Nippon Pulp Industry Co. Ltd. (Japan), and Toyomenka Kaisha Ltd. (Japan) (exporting from Iluka, N.S.W.)
- \* Companies in the above proposal and Hardboard (Aust.) (exporting from Kooragang Island Newcastle).

Despite claims that these woodchip schemes are dependent on sawmill waste, in actual fact their viability, and expansion will depend heavily on taking timber from private forests, and on the N.S.W. Forestry Commission's extensive clear-felling programmes, (the Commission's so-called "Routine Plantation establishment").

The areas affected are enclosed by an approximate boundary stretching west from the Sydney metropolitan area to Lithgow, north to Rylstone, up through Muswellbrook, on through the New England development into southern Queensland and finishing on the coast north of Brisbane.

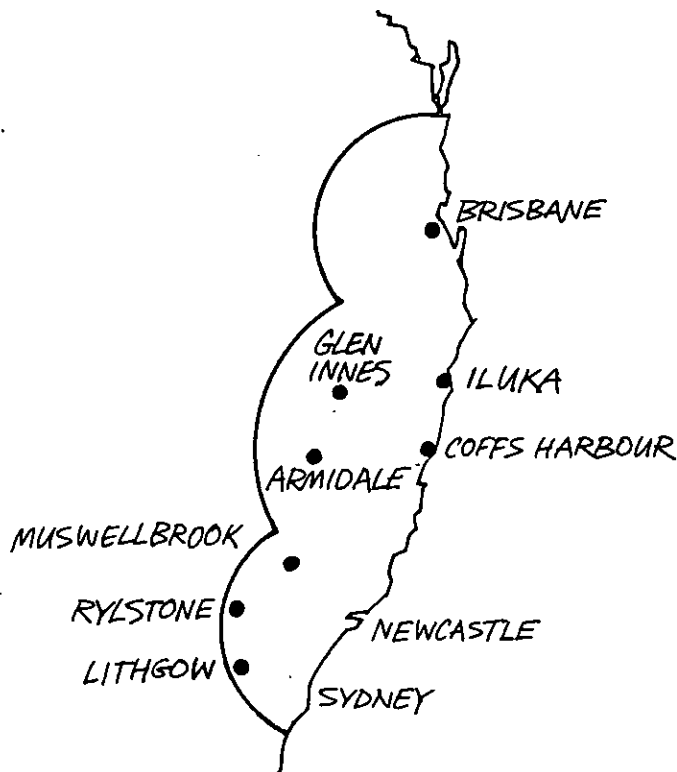
Only a small amount of N.S.W.'s central and northern native eucalypt and rain forests are protected in National Parks.

The introduction of mobile chippers and other new equipment means that virtually all the remaining forest on private land, in State forests and on Crown land is available for woodchipping.

This is an extremely serious situation, even worse is the fact that the policies of the Australian Forestry Council and of the N.S.W. Forestry Commission are actively encouraging the establishment of highly polluting pulp plants on the coast to process the woodchips prior to export.

The joint proposals of Allen Taylor and Co. Ltd. and their Japanese partner, C. Itoh & Co. Ltd., are being backed by a heavy public relations campaign centred on Coffs Harbour.

One aim of this publication is to put their proposed scheme into its correct perspective.



This extensive area of N.S.W. and of southern Queensland will be adversely affected by the proposed woodchip activities.

Many shire councils will face heavy expenditure to repair and maintain roads damaged by woodchip trucks.

Please cut out and post

To: - CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS  
C/- Ecology Action,  
Box C159,  
P.O. Clarence Street, SYDNEY. 2000

From: -  
Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr (Surname) .....

First Name or Initials .....  
or Name of Organisation .....

Address .....  
..... Postcode .....

Phone (Bus.) ..... Home .....

Occupation (optional for statistical records) .....

For mailing purposes please indicate if you are an Ecology Action member  
Yes/No ..... Signature .....

1. SUPPORT - Please register me/this organisation as supporting the CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS. ☐ Please tick, and send me more details
2. HELP - I/We can offer the following assistance to the CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS e.g. clerical, research, getting signatures for petitions, leafletting, forwarding relevant newspaper cuttings, etc.

Please complete .....

3. DONATIONS - Please find enclosed a donation towards the funds of CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS. Any sum is welcome, please make payable to 'CAMPAIGN TO SAVE NATIVE FORESTS'. All donations will be receipted. \$ -

4. LEAFLET - Please forward for distribution ..... copies of this leaflet "WOODCHIPS - the facts" (N.B. the leaflet is designed for distribution by individuals and community organisations wanting to increase public awareness of the implication of woodchip operations.)

single .....	10c	50 copies .....	\$2.50
10 copies .....	50c	100 copies .....	\$5.00
20 copies .....	\$1.00	(all post free)	

Please forward. .... copies @ \$ ... Total \$ -

5. RESEARCH INFORMATION - Please forward me "THE FIGHT FOR THE FORESTS" by R. & V. Routley, A.N.U. Press, Rev. Ed. 400 pages with 37 pages of illustrations, Price \$4.95

POST	N.S.W. within 50km of G.P.O. ....	\$0.58
	N.S.W. elsewhere .....	\$0.79
	QLD, VIC, S.A. ....	\$1.20
	TAS .....	\$1.40,
	W.A. ..	\$1.70
	TOTAL (\$4.95 + postage) .....	\$

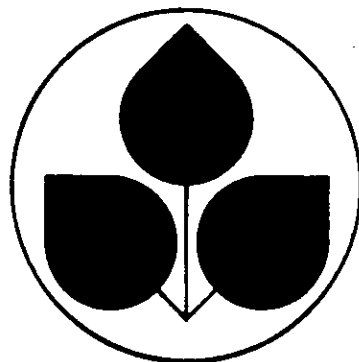
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TOTAL \$ -

PLEASE COMPLETE OTHER SIDE

# news release

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION



206 Clarendon Street  
East Melbourne Victoria  
Australia 3002  
Telephone 419 3366

**ACF**

PUBLIC REJECT WOODCHIP

for immediate release

February 9, 1975

The largest public meeting in Coffs Harbour for several years rejected woodchip proposals for Northern NSW.

Five Japanese companies have formed consortia with several Australian companies, and propose to export woodchips from Brisbane, Iluka, Coffs Harhour and Newcastle.

Over 500 people at the Coffs Harbour Civic Centre Meeting on saturday evening, February 8, voted to strongly resist establishment of the industry at Coffs Harbour.

Anti-Woodchip Action Committees were set up by the Meeting in the following centres:

Coffs Harbour  
Tamworth  
Armidale  
Mullumbimby  
Laurieton  
Maclean and  
Port Macquarie.

The meeting recognised that the forests of the North Coast of NSW are a valuable part of the National Heritage and must not be exploited for the short term benefit of a few.

Speakers were:

- . Mr Paul Scobie, Project Officer, Australian Conservation Foundation
- . Mr D Brownrigg, Marketing Manager, Allen Taylor & Company
- . Mr Frank Walker MLA, Member for Georges River
- . Professor Ian Douglas, of New England University, Department of Geography
- . Mr Peter Metcalfe, of the New England National Parks Trust.

MORE ...

The meeting was chaired by the Honorary Secretary of Ecology Action, Mr D Thompson.

Speakers from the floor included Mr Matt Singleton MLA, and Coffs Harbour Councillors Hogbin, McHugh and Robinson.

The overwhelming rejection of woodchip proposals expressed by the meeting comes as a climax to weeks of debate in Coffs Harbour Shire Council.

One speaker from the floor drew from the representative of Allen Taylor and Company an admission that if the Minister for Agriculture, Senator Wreidt, grants a woodchip export licence the Company will proceed with its plans regardless of local public opinion. The Company he said "had spent too much money on the project, not to".

A message read to the meeting from the Queensland Conservation Council revealed that at least three Queensland ports - Brisbane, Galdstone and Maryborough - are being considered as woodchip export ports.

Coloured slides were shown to the meeting of destruction and pollution caused by existing chipmill projects in Tasmania and at Eden in Southern NSW. Mr Scobie stated that two thirds of Tasmania was leased to woodchip companies.

Allen Taylor's spokesman confirmed that there would be 150 movements of 20 ton trucks through Coffs Harbour six days per week, ie: one truck every 10 minutes. Noise levels quoted for these movements were 80-100 decibels.

Mr Frank Walker MLA, told the meeting that his personal opinion was that an export woodchip industry on the North Coast would be a disaster. He said a flight over the Daischowa-Harris franchise at Eden "should be compulsory for all those councillors and parliamentarians who have been duched by the expensive public relations campaigns being waged by the Japanese, because their hearts would be ..

MORE ...

.. sickened by the sight of devastation so ugly and so extensive that it could only be contrasted with the defoliated battlefields of Viet Nam."

Mr Walker said North Coast woodchip proposals were the 'thin end of the wedge' leading to destruction of North Coast forests. "We have seen this game played too often before, particularly by the mineral sands miners and the limestone miners. You get a toehold, make a local community dependent to some extent on the industry, and then blackmail it into submitting to widespread environmental degradation by threatening to close down and sack workers."

ENDS

Sydney enquiries to Leigh Holloway, councillor, Australian Conservation Foundation, c/ NSW Environment Centre, 263B The Broadway. Telephone 6607735, or 6600960.

# UNITED OPPOSITION TO CHIPMILL PROJECTS IN NORTHERN N.S.W.

## REPORT FOR PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATIVES

MEETING OF DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS FROM 36\* ENVIRONMENT ORGANISATIONS HELD AT COFFS HARBOUR ON 15 DECEMBER 1974.

### THE FACTS.

1. Only 2.7% of North Coast forests east of the Great Divide are within National Parks and Nature Reserves; 56% are Crown land or State forest, while the remainder are in private ownership.
2. Four chipmill proposals have been made to the State and Australian Governments. Chip loading facilities will be located at  
  
Pinkenba on the Brisbane River  
Iluka  
Coffs Harbour  
Kooragang Island at Newcastle
3. The proposals include the use of forests within a 150 mile radius of each of these centres and cover the entire 400 miles of the North Coast from Sydney.

### SURVIVAL OF THESE FORESTS - A REAL CONCERN

Ecology Action reported:

"Because of new forest stripping techniques involving mobile chippers and 'go anywhere' bulk carriers, no North Coast forests will be safe, irrespective of where the port is situated."

"... Government Forestry Authorities and their commercial partners are, both through ignorance and intent, misleading the Australian public as to the real impact of their activities and as to the extent of their plans."

"If the North Coast woodchip activities are established they will demand an ever increasing access to public and private forests. As serious as present proposals are, they are merely the thin edge of the wedge. If the proposed programs are introduced, not only will the available options for future development be drastically reduced, but the economic and social growth of the North Coast will permanently suffer."

Delegates at the meeting expressed thanks to Dr. Cass and Senator Geitzelt for providing copies of the environmental impact studies for the four projects. The N.S.W. State Pollution Control Commission and the Forestry and Timber Bureau had refused to supply these documents.



## OPPOSITION

The meeting trenchantly opposed the chipmill projects in the following resolutions:

1. "That the State Government be pressed to declare a moratorium on any new schemes for chipmilling until the investigations by the House of Representatives Standing Committee inquiring into the forestry industries are completed and their report presented to the public."
2. "That no depletion of, or damage to, Australia's remaining forest areas for the purpose of wood-chipping be allowed. That the Australian and State Governments be asked to implement legislation to safeguard this vital National Heritage and direct their Forestry Commissions accordingly."
3. "That as a basis for our opposition to chipmilling this meeting expresses its concern that a woodchip project proposed on the basis of mill waste and forest residue will escalate to entail subsequent proposals for (1) clearfelling of native forests followed by establishment of plantations;  
(2) pulpmilling."

In a final resolution Government planners were urged to carry out a conservation survey of the forests of Northern N.S.W. and after a public hearing to "implement a proper programme of park and reserve dedication, before any woodchip or other intensive forestry programmes are developed for the North Coast".

Although the State Pollution Control Commission has instituted an investigation into the establishment of the woodchip industry on the North Coast, it will take place over the Christmas period when conservation groups have almost no resources. A call was made to the N.S.W. Minister for Planning and Environment to extend the period for submissions to the end of March. In addition the inquiry should be conducted in public, with some sittings on the North Coast.

## ACTION TAKEN

The meeting resolved to immediately set up a Northern N.S.W. Environment Centre, with full time and volunteer staff, to aid the fight against chipmilling.

Assistance in funding this Centre from governmental and private sources will be appreciated.

(Donations should be sent to the Camden Haven Conservation Society, c/- 77 Bold Street, Laurieton, 2443,)

The following telegram has been sent to the  
Hon. T.L. Lewis, Premier Elect of N.S.W. :

"REPRESENTATIVES OF 36 ORGANISATIONS MEETING IN  
COFFS HARBOUR 15TH DECEMBER COMPLETELY OPPOSE  
CURRENT CHIPMILL PROJECTS ON NORTH COAST WHICH  
WE REGARD AS THIN END OF WEDGE FOR ACCELERATED  
DESTRUCTION OF NORTH COAST AND TABLELANDS FORESTS  
STOP WE CALL ON N.S.W. GOVERNMENT TO REJECT  
THESE DESTRUCTIVE PROJECTS FOR WHICH ADEQUATE  
SUPPORTING SCIENTIFIC STUDIES ARE NOT AVAILABLE  
STOP NORTHERN N.S.W. NEEDS DEDICATION OF ADEQUATE  
SYSTEM OF PARKLANDS BEFORE CHIPMILLING IS  
CONSIDERED.

GRACE M. EASTERBROOK  
CHAIRMAN OF COFFS HARBOUR MEETING  
PHONE: PORT MACQUARIE 83.1804. "

A similar telegram was sent to the Hon. Dr. Moss Cass.

We ask for your support,

Grace M. Easterbrook,  
Chairman.  
(President of Port Macquarie Conservation Society,  
P.O. Box 426, Port Macquarie, 2444.)

- \* Attached is list of societies represented at  
Coffs Harbour Conference.

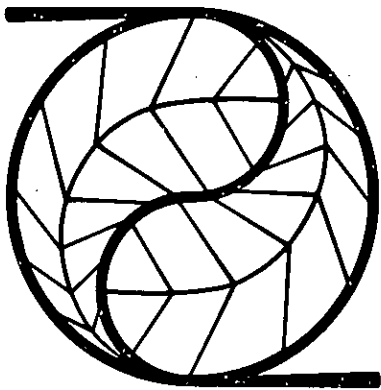
Alphabetical List of Societies represented at  
Coffs Harbour Conference - 15 December 1974

1. Australian Conservation Foundation (Rep)
2. Bananacoast Tourist Authority (Obs)
3. Border Ranges Preservation Society (Rep)
4. Byron Flora & Fauna Conservation Society (Rep)
5. Camden Haven Conservation Society (Rep)
6. Clarence Valley Environment Protection Society (Rep)
7. Clarence Valley Field Naturalists' Club (Obs)
8. Colong Committee Limited (Rep)
9. Dorrigo State Park Trust (Obs)
10. Ecology Action (Rep)
11. Inspect, Armidale Branch (Rep)
12. Maclean Progress Association (Rep)
13. National Parks Association of NSW Armidale Branch (Rep)
14. National Parks Association of NSW Central Region and State Council (Rep)
15. National Parks Association of NSW Hunter-Manning Region (Rep)
16. National Parks Association of NSW Tamworth (Rep)
17. National Trust of Australia (NSW) (Obs)
18. National Trust of Australia (NSW) Hunter Region Landscape Committee (Obs)
19. Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales (Rep)
20. Nelson Bay Conservation Society (Obs)
21. New England National Parks Trust (Rep)
22. New England Trout Acclimatisation Society (Obs)
23. New South Wales Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (Rep)
24. Northern Parks & Playground Movement (Obs)
25. Northern Parks Trust Association (Rep)
26. Port Macquarie Conservation Society (Rep)
27. Port Macquarie Koala Preservation Society (Rep)
28. Port Stephens Conservation Society (Rep)
29. Port Stephens Wildlife Conservation Society
30. Total Environment Centre (Rep)
31. Tweed Brunswick Byron Tourist Authority (Rep)
32. Ulitarra Society (Rep)
33. University of New England, Department of Continuing Education (Obs)
34. University of New England, Natural Resources Society (Obs)
35. Wildlife Preservation Society of New South Wales (Rep)

36. Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland Inc. (Obs)

Rep = Representative

Obs = Observer



## New South Wales Environment Centre

263B The Broadway  
Broadway  
New South Wales  
Australia 2007

Telephone (02) 6600960  
Telegrams Sydenviron Sydney N.S.W.

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:

### FORESTRY KIT

17 march 1975

prepared for NSW North Coast public libraries, as an information service by the NSW Environment Centre.

#### Introduction

The future of Australian native forests is a matter of major public concern. These documents, prepared by citizen organisations, put the case for conservation.

#### Contents

NSW North Coast Woodchips or Recreation?, pamphlet of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Sydney.

Woodchip Laughs at You, Woodchip Campaign, Tasmania

Woodchips - the facts, Campaign to Save Native Forests/Ecology Action, Sydney

The Woodchip Tragedy, Campaign to Save Native Forests/Ecology Action, Sydney

The Great Forest Sell-Out, Viewpoint of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Melbourne

The Packaging Plaque, Viewpoint of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Melbourne

The Chips are Down for the North Coast, pamphlet of the North Coast Environment Centre, Laurieton

Woodchipping on the North Coast - some background notes, Total Environment Centre, Sydney

Forestry Massacre 1, Friends of the Earth, Sydney

... on the other side of the hill

... what's happening to our forests, Hobart group supporting the Radical Ecology Conference

Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletters, Vol 6, Nos 10 and 11, November & December 1974, Melbourne

#### Further information

The Fight for the Forests, by R & V Routley, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University - available from Ecology Action, PO Box C159, Clarence Street, Sydney NSW 2001 \$4-95 each plus 79c postage.

14 MAR 1975

230 Scenic Road,  
KILLCARE HEIGHTS,  
via Hardy's Bay, 2256.

Tel.: 043.60.1024

March 4, 1975.

MEMO. TO ANTI-WOODCHIP COMMITTEES (NORTH COAST)

The Executive of the Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W. has received a report of the Coffs Harbour Meeting of February 8, 1975, convened to consider the development of the woodchip industry on the North Coast of New South Wales.

Amongst other topics arising from the report, the matter of a single committee to receive donations for the campaign was considered. Subsequently it was resolved ...

"THAT the Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W. strongly urges the action committees to appoint a central management group to accept and disburse funds."

The Executive had drawn to its attention at least two sources of financial assistance where difficulty was being encountered by the existence of many action committees without a common co-operative.

This memo. has been forwarded to the seven (7) Anti-Woodchip Action Committees listed below. You may care to consider the NCC recommendation and attempt to bring your colleagues together on the matter under reference. The Council would be pleased to know what transpires and if the N.S.W. Environment Centre can be of assistance.

*Allen A. Strom*

ALLEN A. STROM  
Honorary Secretary.

Coffs Harbour  
Peter Roberts  
P.O. Box 121  
Coffs Hbr 2451

Tamworth  
Robert Prater  
c/o National Parks Assoc.  
P.O. Box 591  
Tamworth, 2340

Armidale  
Peter Metcalf  
c/o National Parks Assoc.  
P.O. Box 196  
Armidale, 2351

Mullumbimby  
Rus Maslin  
1 Tyagarah Street  
Mullumbimby 2482

Lagrieton  
Jill Diewok  
77 Bold Street  
Lagrieton, 2443

Maclean *Don Wattas*  
c/o Clarence Valley Environ-  
mental Protection Scty  
23 Beach Street,  
Yamba, 2464.

Port Macquarie

Grace Easterbrook  
c/o Port Macquarie Conservation Society  
P.O. Box 426  
Port Macquarie, 2444.

12 MAY 1975

Comment by Peter Roberts, Chairman, Coffs Harbour Anti Woodchip Action Committee on Allen Taylor's Environmental Impact Statement.

"Sleek and glossy, bulging with tables and consultant reports, maps and diagrams, lavishly illustrated with expensive colour prints, it sets out to present the facts on the proposal to export 350,000 tonnes of woodchips every year, and to assess the arguments for and against.

For many months aldermen and politicians have been saying, "Don't make up your mind until you've seen the EIS - you must have the facts". So how does this report set out to justify the handing over of large quantities of a scarce resource to a foreign nation, and allowing a private firm to install a large industrial complex on a piece of choice public land right on Coffs Harbour's front doorstep?

There is cold comfort here for anyone seeking fresh ammunition to shoot at the greenies! It's all been fired off long ago in leaks and PR handouts from Allen Taylor's. There is not one fact or argument or statistic in the report likely to bolster the woodchip cause that has not already been well and truly ventilated. On the other hand the EIS spells out clearly some matters where the consortium has not so far been very explicit. For example, how many people realised that the trucks transporting the chips will actually be semi-trailers?

Run-off from the chip pile, which we have been told was to be discharged near the sewage outfall, is destined to meet the ocean at the extreme eastern end of the quarry, next to the start of the south wall. This is much too close to the harbour entrance, and will certainly not please the rock fishermen.

Traffic at the level crossing will be increased by 4.8% - an estimate based on vehicle numbers alone with no allowance for the size of the trucks.

Trucks travelling via High or Orlando Streets will operate on a 12 hour day.

While a ship is in port loading will proceed on a 24 hour basis for a total of from 36 to 40 hours.

Dredging of the harbour, to continue for 4 to 6 months, is scheduled to start next September this year and the first boatload of chips is to depart for Japan at the end of the year.

There will be additional employment 'in country areas for a further 100 men'. This should put to rest the wild claims that there will be 200 extra jobs in and around Coffs Harbour.

When it comes to a detailed breakdown the report is a bit coy, but presumably there will be 36 truckdrivers (only 7 of them based in Coffs) 15 men operating mobile chippers, and most of the balance made up by assigning 1.3 men to each of an unspecified number of chippers at large mills.

There is a burst of candour on page 4, where under the heading Adverse Effects on the Environment are listed 6 aspects; trucks (no dust), dredging (temporary) run-off (minor), noise of trucks and loader (limited), curtailment of sailing course (limited), and soil disruption in the forests. My personal list contains a few more, namely:

The visual impact of having a chip pile and loading facility right at the entrance to the harbour, under the noses of people living or holidaying beside one of the finest views along the coast. There is no validity in arguing that the waterfront is presently a mess. A start has been made to clean it up, and even now the tourist buses bring clients to Beacon Hill as a prime beauty spot.

A permanent loss would result to the community of a large area of potential recreational land. As soon as the Public Works Department has finished with the quarry it should revert to the Shire Council, which will undoubtedly treat it as a priceless piece of real estate.

## Destruction of native fauna and flora.

Elsewhere in the report brief reference is made (p.31) to exhaustive research by qualified officers, but no details are given. Then it goes on to say - "The generally held opinion of those qualified in these areas is that development of this project will not promote conditions any more adverse than already exist under present practice". This is simply not true - qualified and impartial opinion is unanimous that the adverse conditions will be extended and accentuated. It is not easy to see the relevance of some of the appendices that swell the report. One table for instance lists details of truck journeys and loads carried when the PWD was building the inner harbour in 1972. A footnote points out that the weight of rocks carried exceeds the weight of woodchips proposed for a similar period, and inferentially, didn't annoy anybody. Of course, apart from noting that the PWD trucks carried only 12 tons, compared with the 20 ton loads planned for the woodchip trucks. Coffs Harbour residents will be aware that the rocks were brought from the quarry on the other side of the harbour, a journey of less than a mile meeting no cross traffic and passing neither houses, schools, nor shops. The report neglects to mention this and maybe the bureaucrats who read it will assume that journeys are somehow comparable.

Conspicuously missing from the report are several aspects that from a local point of view deserve close attention. One of these is the fact that Jetty Beach, inside the harbour, is only a few hundred metres from the planned loader, and will certainly collect the full impact of any pollution there. Jetty Beach is probably the safest beach in the district. It is very popular with families and those who do not like a rough surf, and at times is even used by boardriders.

Another is the likely effect of woodchipping on the small sawmiller producing such things as cases for the banana industry, pailings, etc. Many of these millers have expressed fears that they will find it difficult to buy logs from private owners who have been supplying the bulk of their needs. Such owners may consider it more profitable in the short term to allow the chippers to clear their forests completely; the result would certainly be large scale unemployment.

Public opinion is surely a matter that looms large in deciding whether to allow a project like this to be established. Allen Taylors' are painfully aware that popular feeling is running heavily, and in many cases bitterly against them, despite a very active public relations effort. A public meeting in February attracted a crowd of more than 500, almost unanimously hostile to the project. A petition circulated through the Shire has been signed by the vast majority of those asked. The petition, with 5,300 signatories, is by far the largest ever in Coffs Harbour. Characteristically, not one word appears about public opinion in the report.

The other glaring omission is the effect on the tourist industry. Nobody can measure this, but the industry is extremely worried and has made no bones about saying so. An adequate environmental impact study should certainly have made some mention of this. So what have Allan Taylors' got to show for the \$150,000 they claim to have spent on the report? It's not a total whitewash - they are too shrewd to risk having it thrown out by the State Pollution Control Commission. In any case how can you whitewash a scheme like this one, where the main advantage is that some rich industrialists are going to get even richer, at the expense of a community asset and at the risk of unmeasurable damage to the environment and the economy? Viewed as an exercise in public relations, it might be fair to say that they have made the best of a difficult job. But looked at as a full and frank review of the likely impact on an already shrinking environment, this report doesn't even get off the ground."



SUBMISSION BY

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

TO

THE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

ON

THE IMPACT ON THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT

OF

THE CURRENT WOOD-CHIP INDUSTRY PROGRAMME

## SUMMARY

### IMPACT ON CONSERVATION

1. The Australian Woodchip Export Industry will prevent the achievement of important conservation goals if allowed to go unchecked. These goals include:
  - Adequate conservation of at least a representative 15% of the original ecosystems of Australia. Only 2% of the original forest area has been reserved and this small percentage is NOT representative. To achieve minimal standards for scientific conservation set by Specht and others, extensive areas should be reserved in the geographic regions in which the woodchip concessions occur (within these regions on average 54% of the plant alliances are not protected at all).
  - Establishment of an effective system of national parks and achievement of effective boundaries, preferably natural boundaries such as water catchments and ridges, for proposed and existing National Parks and Nature Reserves.
  - Conservation of the native forests of Australia in an essentially natural or semi-wild condition. The woodchip industry helps to convert forests to intensive wood production and causes ecologically disruptive and

destabilizing changes in the total forest environment, many of which may be irreversible.

2. The Woodchip Export Industry will seriously interfere with the rapidly increasing demand for forest recreation and other non-wood forest values and will deprive the tourist industry of potential revenue by destroying its "natural capital". Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in Australia with annual increases as follows :-

Recreational use of forests	20%
Use of national parks	10%
Pleasure driving	13%
Walking	10%
Camping and caravanning	12%

Experience in the USA shows a 900% increase in forest recreation use between 1945 and 1960, whereas population increased by only 30% and industrial timber products consumption by 36%.

#### ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

3. The existing woodchip export industry is experiencing financial difficulty in Tasmania. In northern Tasmania, one woodchip operation has closed down because of cut-back in orders from Japan recently, resulting in 28 contractors being thrown out of work with a combined debt of \$1.75 million.

APPM in Ballarat (Victoria) have over 35,000 tonnes of pulp unsold in their warehouses and their order books are 40% below last year's.

4. The working group set up by the Australian Ministers for the Environment and Agriculture reported that, on present indications, total demand (domestic plus export) will exceed domestic supply of eucalypt pulpwood by 1980. Australia's small forest resource, large import bill and increasing domestic demand for pulpwood should be sufficient reasons for not exporting Australia's virgin forests.
5. The same working group found it was "not possible to fulfil all its obligations to examine and prepare a report, including recommendations on the economic and environmental aspects of the export hardwood woodchip industry". The explanation given was the "unwillingness of the companies to divulge confidential information, particularly of a financial nature..."
6. Equity considerations are important because the Australian Government Working Group indicate that the annual value of woodchip exports by 1977 will be \$75 million. It is suggested that alternative use of the forests for recreational and tourist purposes will provide both a greater impact on regional income and a more equitable spread of benefits than will woodchip export.

7. The ACF considers that the woodchip programmes should be viewed holistically and internationally with the view towards Australia approaching a steady-state or sustainable economy.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF EXISTING WOODCHIP EXPORT INDUSTRIES

8. The decision-making procedures leading to the commitment of 17% of Western Australia's forests, 35% of Tasmania's wet and dry sclerophyll forest and 20% of the E.sieberi forest type in NSW to woodchip export have been totally inadequate. No public involvement took place in NSW or Tasmania and only a token gesture was made towards involving the public in Western Australia.
9. The ACF offered to help formulate a management plan for the Eden Project but this offer was refused by the NSW Forestry Commission. Seven years later there is still no management plan available to the public ! Participation by the public is prevented by the forest services and private industries, even though the forest enterprises are heavily subsidised by the public purse.
10. In Tasmania 66% of the State's public forests and a large percentage of the private forests have been committed to management for woodchip export. The scale of the industry and the lack of careful planning have led to major environmental deterioration, and the loss of important conservation

options, as well as economic and social disruption.

11. In Western Australia the Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the W.A. Forests Department was not subject to general public comment before the Australian Minister for Agriculture gave his approval to the export licence. Furthermore, the Australian Government issued the licence before the W.A. Environmental Protection Authority had determined its attitude on the proposal.
12. The current woodchip proposals for the North Coast of NSW are the subject of an investigation by the State but the procedure for environmental review before export approval has not been clearly stated. Will the Australian Government merely accept the findings of the NSW Investigation or will an opportunity be given to the public to present a national perspective on the proposals? A similar uncertainty exists in relation to proposals for East Gippsland.
13. Little research has been carried out into the natural environment and ecosystems being exploited and altered before, during and after woodchipping. Existing surveys indicate the inadequacy of conservation in these regions and the current clearfelling methods used are so destructive of most non-wood values that management in all areas must be modified considerably. Multiple-use sustained yield and woodchipping are not compatible with current management policies.

14. A willingness on the part of forest planners and politicians to accept high population projections without any real questioning, implies a strong bias towards rapid growth. The global energy and food crisis has had little or no effect on the decision-maker's parameters in establishing woodchipping. There have been no socio-economic-environmental studies conducted on the effects of woodchipping in an international context, and no mention of our relationships with underdeveloped neighbouring countries in the Pacific in this regard.
15. There is no evidence to show that woodchipping per se will not be an economic, social and environmental burden on the community. The forestry and wood-based industries should publicly declare their evidence and justifications for the heavy subsidies obtained by them from the Industries Assistance Board. The viability of the woodchipping programme in terms of the total ecological, socio-economic picture should be regarded as not established; and the basic question remains whether public resources are being allocated in the public interest.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Australian Conservation Foundation recommends that :-

#### RECOMMENDATION

1. The committee recommend that as an urgent priority the Australian Government fund an independent multi-disciplinary study to determine what areas within the woodchip concessions need to be conserved to attain the goal of an adequate Australian national park and reservation of a representative 15% of Australia's Forest Resource.

2. The committee request the Minister for Agriculture to vary the conditions of the existing woodchip export contracts, to achieve the following :-

- to require the various State Governments to correct the known deficiencies of ecosystem sampling in the geographical regions encompassing the woodchip export concessions.
- to ensure the establishment of adequate national park and nature reserve boundaries, preferably by consultation with the Australian National Parks Council and the Australian Heritage Commission, in general, and



particularly for :-

Nadgee Nature Reserve (NSW)  
Mount Imlay-Wog National Park (NSW)  
South West Tasmania National Park (Tasmania)  
Norfolk Range National Park (Tasmania)  
(including large areas of temperate  
rainforest)  
Central Plateau National Park (Tasmania)  
Shannon River Catchment Basin (Western Australia)  
Perup Fauna Priority Area (Western Australia)  
South Coast National Parks (Western Australia)  
Cape York Peninsula (Queensland)  
Croajingolong AND  
Other East Gippsland National Parks (Victoria)

- to impose a moratorium on threats to these areas as soon as possible, prior to the finalisation of adequate national park and nature reserve boundaries.
- to ensure the reservation of areas of particular value for tourism and recreation.

3. The committee recommend that the Australian Government fund a study to determine the relationship between natural areas and tourism, including an assessment of regional economic benefits and their distribution in the community. A House of Representatives or Senate Standing Committee would be an appropriate channel of inquiry.

4. The committee recommend that the Australian Government carry out a full social and economic study to establish the actual net benefits to Australia and the local regions of the woodchip export

industry in relation to alternative uses of the resources involved. The study should identify groups which benefit and groups which are disadvantaged and evaluate these benefits and disadvantages. An appropriate avenue for such an investigation would be by the Industries Assistance Commission, not just on woodchipping, but all aspects of the forestry and wood-based industries operations.

5. The committee recommend that the Australian Government grant no further licences for woodchip export because of the expected shortages of supply, the unfulfilled conservation requirements and the unsolved environmental problems.

6. The committee recommend to the Australian Government that the Woodchip Export Licence for the Eden Woodchip Project be not renewed after expiry in December 1976. Australian Government assistance could thus be given to provide woodchips for the domestic market, thus offsetting the expected shortage of supply in the 1990's.

7. The committee recommend to the Australian Government that it review all woodchip export licences. Those operations that cannot alter to provide adequate economic returns to the taxpayer as well as eliminating the adverse environmental and social effects, should have their export licence suspended.

On these criteria the ACF recommend that the following export

licences be suspended :-

- (a) APPM's licence to export woodchips from the North-West Licence Area. (Tasmania's forests are now totally committed for wood production and the area being harvested contains forests extremely important for nature conservation).
- (b) Northern Woodchips licence should be suspended since they are taking from private forests which make up 42% of Tasmania's forested area, yet only 5% of these forests are being regenerated.

8. The committee recommend to the Australian Government the cancellation of the Western Australian woodchip export licence and request the Australian Government to make funds available to re-design the use of existing infrastructure.

9. The committee recommend that the Australian Government clearly publicise the decision-making framework for its new Environment Protection Legislation and, in particular, for the North Coast Woodchip Proposal and that this framework provide full opportunity for public participation.

10. That the following environmental safeguards should be incorporated into continuing woodchip projects :-

- (a) 50% of the forest within concession areas to remain uncut.

- (b) Coupe size to be no larger than 25-50 ha.
- (c) Clearfelling should not be practised except where it can be clearly proven that this is the only method to obtain satisfactory regeneration. Instead a group selection system should be used in such a way that the ecological requirements for regeneration are satisfied.
- (d) Elimination of logging by downhill skidding and crossing streams.
- (e) A wildlife officer should survey the coupe before cutting and recommend patches to be left uncut within the coupe to support wildlife populations that otherwise would be unnecessarily destroyed.
- (f) No tracked vehicles to be used in the forest. Balloon tyred vehicles should be used wherever possible.
- (g) No slope over  $18^{\circ}$  to be logged. In fact, forestry operations excluded from steep slopes, thin rock soils, and also slopes orientated to the sun (i.e. northern aspect).
- (h) Cross drains to be used on snig tracks and roads in steep or erodable country.
- (i) Watercourses and gullies to be protected from

erosion by leaving a 150 metre strip on either side of all streams and gullies.

- (j) Areas of, or adjacent to areas of, high recreation and aesthetic value should not be cut or disturbed for a distance of at least 500 metres on either side of a road, etc.
- (k) Roding should be minimum and should never be placed on steep or erodable slopes.
- (l) Where roads or tracks are regarded as being not essential for management purposes, after logging they should be ripped up and revegetated.
- (m) Adequate conservation measures should be taken to protect 25% of the area within concessions by dedicating large viable ecological reserves (minimum size 10,000 ha.):

## CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS

### Past Management of Australia's Forests

1. The inadequacy of forest conservation measures in Australia are highlighted by the fact that half Australia's forests have been cleared for agriculture.<sup>(2)</sup> For the wetter forests the reduction has been as much as seventy-five percent (see Table I) and even higher in some cases. (c.f. Mr. A.C. Floyd, Senior Research Scientist with the NSW Forestry Commission estimates 89% reduction in rainforests of NSW.<sup>(3)</sup> Therefore, Australian forests cover only half their original area and the wetter forests are an even smaller remnant.

### Present Management of Australia's Forest Resource

2. Australia's present forest resource is still largely unprotected against alienation, forty-seven percent in vacant Crown land and twenty-one percent privately owned. Reserved forest is twenty-eight percent of the total and much of this is being turned over to intensive management for wood. The woodchip industry represents the most recent and largest project to convert natural forest into plantations of even aged, modified and simplified forests. National Parks constitute four percent of the existing forest area which is, in fact, only half the original resource. Consequently a mere two percent of Australia's pre-European forests are to be managed as natural forest ecosystems.

3. This small area of forest is not representative of the original ecosystems. Table I demonstrates the preferential clearing of wetter forests and table II the inadequate conservation of Australian forest alliances. Today 25% of Australia's wetter forests remain and only 16% of forest alliances are adequately conserved based on minimal scientific criteria used by Specht et al. When wildlife conservation, human recreation, watershed protection and aesthetic needs are taken into account, the conservation status of Australian forests is very poor.
4. The geographical regions in which existing woodchip activities are examined in Table I. This reveals that an average of 54% of plant alliances are not conserved in the regions in which woodchipping is taking place. The table also reveals that the alliances within the public forests of these regions have been heavily committed to the woodchip export industry. In Tasmania 66% of the public forests are covered by woodchip export concessions. Therefore, large scale alterations to the public forests have been planned yet adequate conservation measures have not been taken in the regions concerned.
5. With only 2% of the original forest resource protected, and the indecent haste with which the Woodchip Export Industry was established, important conservation areas have been threatened. These include:-
  - (a) Nadgee Nature Reserve at Eden has as its focal point the Nadgee River. This river is one of the

TABLE I

## THE REDUCTION IN AUSTRALIA'S PRE-EUROPEAN FOREST AREA

Forest type	(a) William's estimate of original area	(b) Forwood's estimate of present area	Area of reduction	% Reduction
	Hectares	Hectares	Hectares	%
Tropical rainforest	3,647,000	912,800	2,734,200	75
Sub-tropical rainforest	2,017,800	492,300	1,525,500	77
Temperate rainforest	1,472,900	456,100	1,016,800	68
Net Schlerophyll	10,600,000	2,709,100	7,890,900	74

(a) Source: Conservation of Major Plant Alliances in Australia and Papua New Guinea.

(b) Source: Digest of Forest Resource Statistics Forwood 1974.



TABLE II

## CONSERVATION STATUS OF AUSTRALIAN FOREST ALLIANCES

State (a)	Forest types Nat. Park Water Catchments	(b) Conservation Status per cent age					Total No. of Forest Alliances
		Nil	Poor	Moderate	Reasonable	Excellent	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	No.
NSW	6	27	14	13	18	29	51
NT	10	20	20	-	40	20	5
QLD	3	26	38	15	17	2	46
STH. AUST.	-	35	12	12	41	-	17
TAS.	4	16	12	12	27	33	67
VIC.	2	9	36	22	30	3	336
N. AUST.	1	23	23	48	6	-	31
AUSTRALIA	4.3%	21%	22%	18%	23%	16%	253

(a) Source: "The Digest of Forest Resources Statistics" - Forwood 1974.

(b) Source: "Conservation of Major Plant Communities in Australia and Papua New Guinea"  
Ed. R.L. Specht et al.

Figures for Tall Closed-forest / Closed-forest / Low closed-forest / Tall open-forest / Open forest /  
Low open-forest.

TABLE III

CONSERVATION STATUS IN EXISTING WOODCHIP REGIONS

TABLE III

Geographical Regions (after Specht et al)	Woodchip Concessions and Areas (ha)	% of Plant Alliances <u>Not</u> covered	Forest Alliances being woodchipped (see footnote (c) for numbers in brackets)	% of Public Alliance committed to woodchip export
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last complex rivers along the east coast of Australia to be uninhabited and virtually undisturbed. Despite requests over many years from conservationists, including personnel in the Fauna Protection Panel and the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the NSW Forestry Commission refused to surrender the upper few thousand hectares to the reserve and thus secure the Nadgee catchment. Despite the concession of 255,000 ha. of public forest to the woodchip export industry, the NSW Forestry Commission has recently announced plans to log this small catchment area for both sawlogs and woodchips. This act will ruin the Nadgee River catchment as a scientific reference area and increase the vulnerability of the reserve to uncontrolled visitor use and exotic plants and animals. The need for rational boundaries to effectively manage an area as an ecological reserve is well documented.

Since the area in question is only 1% of the whole woodchip concession the arrogance of the NSW Forestry Commission in refusing such a legitimate request indicates their overall disregard of conservation principles.

- (b) The other national parks in the west of the Eden Woodchip Concession, including Nungatta and Mount Imlay, need a rationalisation of boundaries to provide areas with an

adequate representation of all forest types to be logged, and areas large enough to ensure viability. The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Committee's proposals were rejected by the NSW Government but these proposals would have provided a far better reserve system than the existing small, scattered national parks.

(c) The ACF South West Tasmania National Park proposal is covered in part by Tasmanian Pulp and Forest Holdings Reserve for woodchips, as well as by domestic concession areas held by APM and ANM.

(d) Norfolk Range National Park (Tasmania) proposal is covered in part by Associated Pulp and Paper Mills' North West Licence area. This area contains the major remnants of the Temperate Rain Forest in Australia, the preservation of which is of great importance in obtaining an adequate system of ecological reserves.

(e) The proposed Tasmanian Central Plateau National Park is covered in part by TP & FH Reserve and APPM's Wesley Vale Concession.

(f) Within the Western Australian woodchip concession three major conservation reserves have been suggested by the Report of the Conservation Through Reserves Committee to the Environment Protection Authority 1974. These

include the Proposed South Coast National Park, the Shannon River Drainage Basin, and the Tone-Perup River area. Existing proposals for conservation are inadequate, particularly in providing representation of the Karri and Karri-marri forest types.

- (g) On Cape York Peninsula, a woodchip proposal claims to have been given an assurance of access to 400,000 acres around the Weymouth Bay Region. The entire Cape York Peninsula is so little known and so undisturbed that it must all be treated as of extremely high conservation value. The mixture of Indo-Malayan with Australian flora and fauna in this region makes it of special significance to conservation. It also represents an opportunity to reserve a sufficiently large area to create a tropical wilderness.

6. Despite the previous generations of Australians' apparent lack of concern in the recreation, wildlife, aesthetic and educational values of their forests<sup>(4)</sup> there has been a major shift in public needs from our forests. In May 1974 the Council of the Australian Conservation Foundation approved a general statement on forestry, part of which states:-

"The existing native forests, although substantially reduced in area since European settlement, are the main remaining representatives of the original terrestrial ecosystems of the more populous area of Australia. They make a major contribution

to the quality of life Australians currently enjoy and have an extremely high value for the conservation of flora and fauna, for watershed protection, for public enjoyment and recreation, and for maintaining the beauty and character of the natural landscape. The value of native forests for these purposes for the most part outweighs the value of the forests to the community for the production of wood."

7. As was recently shown in the USA<sup>(5)</sup> the conservation movement is part of the environment movement. More specifically, it is the public's demand for involvement in decisions affecting the forest resources, both private and public, in order that environmental quality will not be sacrificed for economic gain. Further, Scott<sup>(5)</sup> pointed out that the forestry enterprise should not count on public concern for the environment as being a passing fad.
8. The Australian Conservation Foundation recognises that in order to meet domestic wood requirements it is necessary to manage some areas of native forest with wood production as the dominant role. But the ACF firmly believes that wood production should not in general be the dominant role of publicly-owned native forests, and that forestry authorities, in their management practices and goals, should endeavour to achieve a situation in which the non-wood production values of native forests are retained and where possible enhanced, and that the non-wood production values are not damaged by wood production activities. This

requires an appropriate multiple-use sustained-yield policy for forest lands.<sup>(6)</sup>

Another method of land evaluation which has recently been advocated for use in Australia is the set of techniques devised by Ian McHarg in the United States. Recher<sup>(7)</sup> recommends use of the techniques and has given a brief exposition.

"McHarg identifies the social, economic and environmental values of the land in question and assigns each a ranked value. There is no attempt to equate the value of land for agriculture with the value of land for wildlife, but simply to establish that some land is better for farming than other land, just as some land has greater wildlife value. Land which is prime wildlife habitat may also be important for recreation, water conservation and timber production, but each land use or value is treated separately. In planning the construction of, say, a road or the location of an airport, the physical character of the land is also considered .... Again, ranked values are assigned to the land according to its suitability for the type of construction required. At this point, it should be clear that decisions about land values are required which exceed the competence of any single expert and demand an interdisciplinary approach. The final decision on the location of development is determined by superimposing all land use values on the suitability values of the land for construction, and selecting that part of the land which has the least value for other kinds of land use

and is physically suitable. The outstanding value of this method is that one does not have to assign a monetary value to land which, for example, may be an important scenic reserve or have other intangible social values. It is a means by which the real costs of development to the community can be measured and land used to the best advantage." (10)

Land evaluation is not a clearly defined single technique but nevertheless must be attempted in order to provide better information than is presently available for decisions about land use.

Land use policy formation cannot successfully be carried out without some form of community participation. People need to be informed that the future use of areas of land is being considered and provision made for their views and requirements to be made known. Planners and administrators would therefore need to be trained in facilitation of community involvement.

9. The Australian Conservation Foundation believes that the interests of present and future generations would be better served by the retention of the natural native forests than by the development of a woodchip export industry achieved at the expense of important and multiple non-wood production values. It would be more realistic to improve utilization of available biological production rather than try to increase biological productivity by more intensive integrated (sawlog and pulpwood) forestry management.



INCREASING PUBLIC DEMAND FOR MULTIPLE USE OF FORESTS

10. Being unable to place a monetary value on many non-wood production values, decision-makers have usually ignored these so-called "intangibles". Some of the measurable parameters that indicate the high importance of these non-wood production values to the Australian community, include :-

11. Increase in National Park Visitor Use

A report by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service<sup>(3)</sup> predicted that national parks within 100 miles of Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Perth will reach maximum visitor capacity by 1980. The same report predicted that the average annual increase in visitors to national parks will be 12%, indicating the tremendous public demand for managed natural areas.

12. Membership of Conservation Organisations

The 1974 edition of the Australian Conservation Foundation's "Conservation Directory" lists 370 conservationist organisations with a total membership of 307,000. These organisations represent those groups with either a primary interest in the philosophy of conservation (e.g. ANZAAS, ACF, ZPG) or those with vested interest in maintaining the natural areas they use (e.g. YHA and Bushwalking Clubs). When this number of people in a community voluntarily join organisations with a primary interest in conservation of natural resources, there should be some effective legal procedures for allowing participation in the decisions affecting natural areas.

Also, forest services and private forest enterprises must accept public involvement in its decision-making processes. Legislation should encourage, include, and be sensitive to, the demands of the public in the preparation, working and re-evaluation of the democratic ethic. The public are, after all, the final arbiters.

13. Passive Enjoyment of Natural Areas

It has often been strongly argued that only a small proportion of the population are fit enough to actively use many natural and wilderness areas, therefore the community places little value on such areas. This is the same as saying the Australian public has very little interest in football because only a small proportion of the population ACTUALLY PLAY football; the majority prefer a vicarious enjoyment of a physically demanding activity so they drive to view the wilderness from a vantage point or read about the beauty and adventure to be found in natural areas, or watch a TV documentary about remote and dangerous places.

14. The ACF Librarian has compiled a brief bibliography of recent books relating to the appreciation and enjoyment of Australian natural areas. This is not complete, but demonstrates that in the last three years, an average of 213 books on Australian natural areas were published each year. The noticeable increase in recent years of "Australiana" books that rely heavily on the natural landscape of Australia as the chief attraction, confirms the popularity and interest in the rugged, natural areas of Australia remaining unspoiled.

15. National Heritage and National Character

Australia is one of the youngest European nations in the world and lacks a long European cultural background, but does have a very long and interesting geological, biological and aboriginal history. Therefore, natural areas and their inhabitants are a most important part of Australia's National Heritage, a fact clearly recognised by the recent National Estate Committee of Enquiry. It is probable that experience of wild remote places will be denied future Australians unless the present generation consciously decides to preserve undeveloped tracts of natural Australia.

16. Tourism and Natural Areas

The Domestic Travel Industry in Australia has an annual turnover of \$700 million compared to the \$650 million turnover of the forest products industries. Natural features are the "capital" of the tourist industry, according to Mr. Bruce Small, the "developer" of Queensland's Gold Coast, when he recently praised the conservationists for looking after this "capital". The advertising used by tourist authorities clearly establishes the importance of natural areas to the tourist industry.

17. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in Australia with a 30% increase in private construction in the entertainment and recreation business between 1969/70 and 1970/71. The North Queensland Region is expected to earn \$250 million a year from tourism<sup>(8)</sup> in 1980.

In Victoria, Greig<sup>(9)</sup> has estimated that the average annual rate of growth for pleasure driving is 13%, walking 10%, and camping, caravanning, 12%. An economic study of logging in Miangarie State Forest revealed that the income stimulus to the region would be 3 to 8 times greater, by making Miangarie a National Park instead of logging it <sup>(10)</sup>. The tourist industry is largely dependent on natural features, including forests, as the chief attraction to visitors, therefore the ACF believes that the conservation and preservation of natural areas does have an economic justification.

"In a nation where land is plentiful and labour is scarce, there is little need to fear that large economic losses will be incurred if land is reserved for recreation instead of being used for other purposes."<sup>(11)</sup>

#### 18. Wilderness Experience

McKenry has written a value analysis of wilderness areas <sup>(12)</sup> which details most of the non-wood values of forests. Many of these values, like the psychological and physical benefits from wilderness recreation, cannot be directly expressed in the market place. However, these wilderness experiences are simply another manifestation of cultural and sporting activities which are widely acknowledged as essential aspects of human experience in our society. The Australian Conservation Foundation believes that these important non-market place values have been overlooked in decision-making at all levels of Government.

19. The Australian Conservation Foundation, in a recent submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation Inquiry into Forestry, recommended that :-

"The Australian Government make funds available to National Parks and Wildlife Services around Australia with the intention that these bodies would manage at least a representative 50%\* of the native forest resource.

20. "\* This does not imply 50% of the native forests will be "locked up" in National Parks, but simply a change from the present emphasis of wood production towards non-wood production goals.

Much of the 50% would be classified Forest Park and could be selectively logged if this was considered the correct management to provide an optimum across all forest values."(6)

21. The US<sup>6</sup> experienced an incredible 900% increase in the recreational use of its National Forests between 1945 and 1960.<sup>(13)</sup> (c.f. during the same period population increase was only 30%, GNP 37% and industrial timber products consumption 36%). USA has already put aside 7.2% of its National Forests for wilderness as well as its extensive national park system. NSW, by comparison has not dedicated any of its state forests for wilderness areas. Instead it has set aside small acreages as flora reserves, totalling an impressive 0.3% of State Forests. (These Flora Reserves can be logged if the Forestry Commission's internal management plan so specifies).

The Report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on

Environment and Conservation (May 1975) on the Softwood Inquiry mentioned that the NSW Forestry Commission while accepting some responsibility for water catchment protection, gave very little consideration for flora and fauna values. Apart from foresters the NSW Forestry Commission employs no-one with specialised qualifications in the environmental sciences.<sup>(14)</sup>

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

22. In two recent papers<sup>(15)</sup> to a road maintenance symposium conducted by The Australian Road Research Board in Launceston, Tasmania (April 1974) evidence was given that the log trucks hauling for the woodchip industry had considerable social and economic impact on the local community. The following is a quote from paper 7<sup>(16)</sup> "Effects of Heavy Vehicles on Council Roads".

#### "SOCIAL IMPACT OF LOG CARTING

23. It was assumed that log carting would affect only the road system which connects the forests with the Woodchip Industries. However, it rapidly became clear that the industry would affect the suburban streets of the Launceston Area. Where other carting operations, such as bulk milk carters, gravel and mineral ore carters, and petrol tankers, operate from a central depot where storage and garage facilities are available, a substantial number of log carters operate from private homes in the suburbs.
24. Carters return late at night from the forest, fully loaded and park

their trucks in suburban streets outside their residences. This practice has several undesirable effects :-

- (a) streets which are constructed to minimum standards are subjected to heavy axle loadings;
- (b) the residents are subject to the noise aspects connected with large trucks;
- (c) traffic hazards are created, AND
- (d) damage to nature strips and services located in the nature strips, such as stormwater drains, water connections and PMG cables and pits, is considerable.

25. Individual carters also service their vehicles at home and repairs are carried out while trucks are parked during night times and at weekends. Such practices contravene the Town Planning Regulations concerning residential areas. The log trucks leave the suburban streets usually between 5 and 6AM and again residents are subjected to noise.

26. The traffic hazards created by the parked trucks is substantial. Legal measurements of trucks now allow a maximum width of 2.5 m. (8ft.2½in.) and an overall length of 14.33 m. (47ft.). The average width of the suburban street is only 6.50m (21ft.).

27. The parking of vehicles over 4.6m (15ft.) in suburban streets exceeding one hour duration is illegal under present traffic laws,

however these regulations are not enforced.

28. It has been suggested that a central marshalling yard be established in the Launceston area, where log trucks and interstate carters can park overnight. Such a yard would enable carters to leave their vehicles at a suitable point near the highway leading to the wood-chip industries and would prevent all the undesirable effects on the residential areas listed above. Such a marshalling yard would also provide garage and repair facilities. Motel type accommodation could be added to cater for the interstate drivers. At present possible sites and preliminary designs for such a marshalling yard are under investigation. It is essential that log trucks are removed from suburban streets as soon as possible, since certain streets subjected to this type of traffic are already signs of failure and repair costs are increasing. No toll is collected from log carters covering the mileage over suburban streets.

#### TRAFFIC HAZARDS

##### Road Debris

29. In many locations timber trucks enter roads directly from loading areas, carrying with them considerable quantities of mud, loose bark etc. When tracked vehicles load directly onto trucks on the roadside, damage to pavement surface and roadside drains occurs.

##### Flying Debris

30. Flying debris such as chips from pilot plants, bark, gravel and dust from uncovered vehicle create hazards :

(a) owing to restriction of drivers' vision,



(b) diverting attention, AND

(c) breaking windscreens.

#### Speed Variance

31. The differential in speed between loaded trucks and normal traffic has a detrimental effect on traffic flow. The East Tamar Highway has some passing lanes but on most State roads and all Council roads difficulty in overtaking is experienced.

#### Vehicle Width

32. Many Council roads have a pavement width of only 4.57m (15 ft.). With the minimum truck width of 2.5m (8ft.2½in.) it is impossible for vehicles to pass without leaving the pavement."
33. At the same symposium paper No.6 was "A Study of existing and main road subject to heavy log traffic." The report analysed the effect of log trucks (mostly woodchip trucks) at Frankford, Tasmania.
34. Part of the conclusions stated :-
- "Where log traffic of the order of 90 vehicles per day, and loaded in excess of axle load limits (under a repealed legislation) by up to 40 per cent, used a road in addition to some 250 commercial vehicles over 3 tons, it was found necessary for new construction to increase pavement thickness by some 51 mm. (2in.) above that which would be required if the trucks had complied with previous axle load limits."
35. The effect of the log traffic on existing construction, whose

thickness was borderline for a low traffic category, was to practically destroy the sealed surface over a period of some 18 months and to result in maintenance costs per mile some 5 times the average for the district.

36. On other existing construction whose thickness was structurally adequate for the log and other traffic maintenance costs have increased of the order of 2 to 3 times the average due mainly to edge patching required on a sealed width of 4.9m - 5.5m (16ft. to 18ft.)."
37. On 11 March this year the Davenport Advocate ran an editorial which stated :-

"The boom that the woodchip industry brought to Tasmania has turned into an extravagant 'bust' - a financial dilemma that is coming to light as the unemployed, the over-committed and the already bankrupt get together to try to sort out their plight."

The same editorial went on to reveal :-

"Twenty-eight log hauliers who have lost their contracts because of the slump, say they have a combined debt of almost \$1.75 million on machinery, equipment and other commitments, and they suggest that the State's log hauliers could owe as much as \$10 million."

38. Australia's forest resources are limited including the ability to supply pulpwood, as revealed by a recent Australian Government Report. (17) :-

"Current estimates of future trends in supply and demand for

pulp products, from the 1974 Forestry and Wood-Based Industries Development Conference, indicate that domestic demand will increase at a faster rate than domestic supply. On present indications it is expected that total demand (domestic plus exports) will exceed domestic supply of eucalypt pulpwood by about 1980. Consequently there may be strong competition for scarce hardwood pulp resources from around 1980."

Why has Australia deliberately embarked on an export programme, at great social and environmental cost, so that an already meagre commodity becomes scarce by exporting the present surplus ?

39. The answer cannot be economic as revealed in a series of three articles by Lance Norman in the Financial Review. The second article (7/5/75) was headlined - "Australia appears to Profit Little from its own Woodchips". In the article he describes the uncertainty surrounding the profitability of the woodchip export industry :-

"Years after being given the task at Eden by the NSW Government, the NSW Forestry Commission has lately done a computer study, which reaches the conclusion that the project will profit the State eventually and that the decision was a correct one. However, the calculations are already out of date because of high interest rates and inflation."

40. The recent "Survey of Australian Travel" by the Australian Travel Research Conference indicates that a total of \$735,707,000 was spent on domestic travel between July 1973 and June 1974. Main and subsidiary holidays accounted for 56% of this expenditure and private travel for a further 14%. In other words 70% of this sum was spent by individuals travelling for other than business reasons. For those on a main holiday all but 11% of expenditure (ie air and other transport fares) is probably spent in the region within small businesses. Therefore the tourist section of travel industry spends \$460 million (approximately) in small businesses in the region in which they visit. It seems certain that these estimates are conservative, but they indicate the size and importance of the domestic tourist industry in Australia that is so closely linked with, and often dependent on quiet, natural surroundings.

When determining the assistance to be given to an industry, the Industries Assistance Commission must consider the efficiency with which that industry utilises the community's resources. (18) Paragraph 115 in the IAC's 1973-74 Annual Report summarises the position as follows :-

"In the context of the Act, 'efficiency' includes much more than the technical efficiency with which particular production is undertaken - as measured by output per machine hour or per acre. For instance the factories or farms in an industry might be managed in a way which is technically very efficient. But their use of the community's basic resources would nevertheless

be inefficient from the community's point of view, if their production were relatively unsuited to local conditions - that is, to the general production and marketing environment and the resource endowment of Australia - and thus required relatively high levels of public assistance to support it."

The FORMWOOD\* panels were unable to supply any data on the efficiency of the wood-based industries in Australia. Their comments (on page 36 of the FORMWOOD Report) are nevertheless worth noting :

"None of the FORMWOOD Panels compared the cost of processing forest output in Australia with those elsewhere in the world ....

The available statistics indicate a generally high labour intensity in major sections of the industry. In view of the lack of comparative advantage in other labour intensive industries in Australia it is extremely unlikely that there is currently an overall comparative advantage in local processing of wood."

This assessment is confirmed, but not necessarily for those reasons, by table 4.3.1. in the 1973-74 IAC Annual Report. (This report was available well before the second convening of the FORMWOOD Conference). The relevant part is produced in Appendix I.

As discussed in appendix 3.4 of the IAC Report, the "effective rate of assistance" is a good guide to the efficiency of an industry in the Australian context; in general, the higher the effective rate

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\* FORMWOOD (1974). Report of the Forestry and Wood-based Industries Development Conference - for Timber Bureau, Canberra.

of assistance, the lower is the industry efficiency. The rightmost column in Appendix I converts this rate to monetary terms. The "net subsidy equivalent" for all the wood-based industries totalled \$165 million in 1969-70.

Appendix I demonstrates that, in the past, wood-based industries have not been noted for high efficiency. For the future, the FORMOOD Report notes on page 36 :

"The high concentration of relatively uniform material from plantations may be expected to lead to the general adoption of capital-intensive production methods in both harvesting and subsequent processing. In the use of these methods, the more developed nations such as Australia, have a demonstrated comparative advantage."

This conclusion is not supported by the evidence in Appendix I of this submission. On the contrary, the high labour intensity and low capital intensity of the "Log Sawmilling" and "Resawn and Dressed Timber" groups receive negligible assistance. The more capital intensive industries in the "wood and wood products" sector generally receive assistance very much greater than the average in the manufacturing sector, as a whole. Even the capital intensive "Pulp, Paper and Paperboard" group, which receives relatively low assistance, cannot be regarded as efficient in the Australian context. As indicated in Appendix I, most of this group's output is consumed in industries which, on the whole, require truly extravagant rates of assistance in order to survive.

The problems of evolving efficient forestry and wood-based industries in the future is clearly a complex one. The questions have not been answered in the FORMOOD Report, so that a thorough IAC investigation is essential. Nevertheless, it can be concluded from Appendix I that an efficient forestry and wood-based sector would bear little resemblance to FORMOOD's Production Forestry Development Plan.

Thus, FORMOOD's conclusion that it would be "prudent" to aim for self-sufficiency (page 36), stands in stark contrast to the IAC's assessment in paragraph 130 of its 1973-74 Annual Report :

"There has in the past in Australia been a preoccupation with import replacement, sometimes without concern for the level of assistance required. This has reduced national wealth by diverting resources into activities in which they are used less efficiently."

While matters of environment and regional development are of very great social importance, this section will deal with two specific social problems - safety and stability of employment.

The Australian figures for disabling industries in the forestry and wood-based industries are alarming. The FORMOOD Report on page 22 gives rates which are five times the South African rates and ten times the American rates. This is clearly a matter which deserves close consideration before forestry expansion plans are endorsed. While greater capital intensity may reduce these rates in the

future, there is one industry, the export woodchip industry, which gives cause for concern. This problem is currently illustrated in Tasmania, where a great many inexperienced men were persuaded by the woodchip boom to become logging contractors. The uncomfortably high accident rate from chain saws and heavy machinery is now becoming known.

The Tasmanian experience also demonstrates the high degree of employment instability inherent in a booming woodchip industry. Due to the recent collapse of the woodchip market, a large number of logging contractors are becoming bankrupt and many other employees have been thrown out of work. The consequences of such instability should be seriously examined if export woodchipping is to be used to finance the expansion of domestic pulpmills.

These social problems associated with some parts of the forestry and wood-based industries would have to be carefully weighed by the IAC when considering extensions to assistance.



## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF EXISTING WOODCHIP EXPORT INDUSTRY

### Effect on Vegetation

41. Clearfelling forests reduces the normal structural diversity of a forest to even-aged regrowth. In Tasmania and possibly Western Australia replanting is to take place with favoured species over the 500 ha. coupe. This reduces the diversity of the dominant vegetation layer, thus reducing the value of the forest as a natural ecosystem supporting populations of plants and animals in a dynamic balance. Even-aged and simplified ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to pest outbreaks (such as Sirex wasp) and chronic fire damage and consequently require intensive management. The use of chemical pesticides to control pests and the operation of extensive fire protection measures all contribute to the degradation of the surrounding natural areas and in particular to the introduction of pesticides, fertilizers and soil particles into surrounding waterways. No research into the complexing or synergistic effects of these treatments to forest ecosystems due for conversion to woodchipping has been undertaken. Also, there is no available data on the effects of bacterial, fungal or mycorrhizal association, during and after, clearfelling and woodchipping operations - and no information on native viruses.

Adverse effects of tropical vegetation are being experienced by woodchipping in Papua New Guinea<sup>(19)</sup>. The fact is that Australian and Japanese forestry operations are particularly destructive of the vulnerable tropical rainforest ecosystems. It is the use of western technology when used indiscriminately in the rainforest areas that

is creating permanent ecosystem destabilization and disruption.<sup>(20)(21)</sup>

In the long term, it may be argued that woodchip practices are contributing to the malnutrition of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific islands. The royalty rates (8 cents a 100 super ft. at Madang, with a probable increase to 12 cents per 100 super ft. over the next 5 years) fall far below those for Australian projects. Average PNG royalties are less than one half of average Australian royalties and only 75% of the royalties paid accrue to the public. There is ample evidence that Australian woodchip schemes are operating at a net public loss.<sup>(19)</sup> Such royalties will not be adequate to meet sustained-yield reafforestation costs, the dollars will not flow to the local population who are poor and in need, or assist in family planning clinics and population control programmes. Such woodchip operations will have the long-term effect of creating serious socio-economic problems for the local populations with probable irreparable environmental damage. And the products (and profits) from the woodchipping are directed primarily to the developed countries, such as Australia and Japan.

#### Effect on Wildlife

42. The disruption of the normal distribution of age classes, plant species and habitat types that occur over wide areas in woodchip operations could lead to the regional extinction of some species. Aboreal animals are particularly threatened.<sup>(22) (23)</sup> One of the most definitive studies on the effect of clearfelling was on the Greater Glider by Tyndale-Biscoe which revealed that 95% of the

animals die within a week on the site of their former homes. The reduction of age classes to new regenerating forest over a large area destroys the nesting holes found in hollow branches and stems of overmature trees. In a natural forest there is a wide variety of habitats available with many different sources of food coming into production at different times of the year. Migratory parrots and lorikeets feed on eucalypt flowers and seeds. Even though they may not be resident in a region they rely on the availability of food from a given area. Reduction of large areas of forest to juvenile regeneration will remove much of this food and the regular control burning needed to protect dense, even-aged forests will further reduce the availability of food from understorey plants as well as interfering with winter nest building and breeding for many organisms. As was emphasised at the recent Ecological Society of Australia Symposium in Brisbane on "Managing terrestrial ecosystems" (24) there is scant information regarding the comparative effects of burning (prescribed or not) - that is, small frequent burns, or large, infrequent burns - which is more desirable for long term wildlife habitat management ?

#### Effect on Soils

43. Soils and soil nutrients are extremely important for the sustained yield of timber and non-wood values from forests. Any loss of soil is a sign of instability, a loss of resource, and must therefore be viewed with alarm. (25) Many of the forest operations are taking place on steep slopes and erodable soil yet logging continues on

slopes up to 50° in Tasmania and NSW. It has been shown<sup>(26)</sup> that clearfelling can lead to a dramatic increase in the level of nutrients in surrounding streams, particularly in the first few years after clearfelling. The nutrient status of many forest soils being woodchipped is so low that any nutrient loss needs to be considered carefully. The loss of nutrients takes place during woodchipping because clearfelling removes large volumes of wood containing nutrients and without vegetation cover the nutrients from forest litter are rapidly released.<sup>(25) (27) (28) (29)</sup>

The streams export nutrients by transporting them in both the soluble and the insoluble forms.<sup>(30)</sup> During clearfelling at Eden it was estimated in a recent Australian Government Report<sup>(11)</sup> that severe disturbance of 40% of the logging coupe resulted from clearfelling at Eden and an average figure of 30% severe disturbance was possible.

44. Studies in America show that over 90% of soil losses from forest clearings and logging is the direct result of exposed soil in road fills and cuts, and from concentrated runoff from poorly drained roads.<sup>(25)</sup>

The combined effect of excessive clearing during clearfelling, with up to 40% of the coupe being severely disturbed and then burning taking place, could increase the rate of erosion so dramatically in the first few years that serious nutrient loss will occur. In America it has been estimated<sup>(31)</sup> that after one to four rotations in clearcut areas it will be necessary to wait 5,000 years for

geological weathering to produce enough nutrients for a commercial crop of timber. The rate of nutrient export should be no greater than the rate of nutrient replacement, to avoid a long term failure of sustained yield. Previous forest clearing in Australia has led to infertility and loss of production from cleared forest areas (e.g. Atherton Tableland, Queensland; Richmond-Tweed Valleys, NSW; S.E. South Australia; the Strezlecki Ranges, and Ballarat, Victoria) as well as silting up and turbidity of river estuaries (e.g. Wallagaraugh R, see 11d) with the associated problems for navigation, flooding and aquatic life. Man's impact on soils has been to speed up the natural erosion processes by about 100-fold or more. However, research on resultant soil nutrient losses due to forestry operations is still in its infancy. (25)

#### Effect on Hydrological Cycle

45. Clearfelling and exposing the soil to direct sunlight could cause a rise in the water table. (32) The short term effect of this in Western Australia could result in increased salinity and lead to difficulties in regeneration if dry periods are experienced. (33) The compacted soil of snig tracks, roadways and log dumps could also affect the hydrological cycle on the amount of water available in the soil. The root-rot fungi, Phytophthora cinnamoni is affecting 5% of West Australian forests and the Western Australian Forests Department admits that the rate of spread of this disease will increase as a result of the woodchip industry.

46. West Australian Forests are particularly important because Western Australia is too far from eastern forests to be cheaply supplied with timber yet the state has only 0.72% of its land in dedicated forests. Western Australia has a very poor conservation record (only 1% of existing forests in conservation reserves) and the mining industry and public utilities are alienating forested land. Water is a particularly important resource in Western Australia and the forested catchments to be affected by the woodchip industry are particularly important. (34)

47. In the Australian Government Report of the Working Group looking into the operation of the woodchip export industry they list the arguments usually presented by forest managers for the maintenance of clearfelling as a technique :-

- (a) The argument that it is an 'ecological requirement' of eucalypt forests to have clearfelled areas for regeneration. This 'ecological requirement' is in the order of a few acres, not coupes up to 2,000 acres as practised at Eden.
- (b) 'Waste wood' left to decay in the forest floor is now being used. The extent of 'waste' is questionable and the material left on the forest floor is not 'waste' in an ecological sense, since it provides a source of nutrients for the new forest growth and habitat for many organisms in the forest. In fact many trees are now felled that would previously have been left standing - thus reducing the value

of the forest for anything except wood production.

- (c) There are other ways of achieving fire protection in a region and indeed this problem has not been solved just by the increased roading and money available in the woodchip regions. In fact the effect of a wildfire on dense even-aged forests before they have set seed could be more damaging than a wildfire through a natural diverse forest that has adapted its structure and species composition to suit the fire patterns of the region. It is not sufficient to reduce the incidence of fire for these new forests - total fire exclusion is probably required and this cannot yet be achieved in vast areas of the woodchip concessions.
- (d) The technical advantages to result from intensive forestry may not apply under such factors as increased fuel costs and reduced yields due to serious loss after fire and pest damage. Intensive farming in America produces more food per square metre than an under-developed nation but this production requires a net energy subsidy from fossil fuels. In the underdeveloped countries each square metre represents a net energy gain to the community from trapped solar energy.
- (e) Integrated pulpwood and sawlog harvesting is not necessarily dependent on large scale clearfelling if practised properly.

It can be conducted in an environmentally more responsible manner. However, in the Foundation's view, no such operations as practised or proposed within Australia at present are satisfactory from the environmental point-of-view in that :-

- (1) Too many non-sawlog trees are felled and not enough left standing;
  - (2) No emphasis is placed on the value of so-called "logging waste" for essential nutrient recycling and fauna conservation;
  - (3) No guarantees are given that the areas logged will in fact be no larger for the additional extraction than if only sawlogs were being extracted.
- (f) Increased roading in forested areas for logging provides increased opportunity for some types of forest recreational use, but clearfelling is not necessary to obtain this type of roading. Roading for 'selective' logging usually leaves the forest in a more natural, diverse and attractive state for visitors.

43. The loss of amenity and social disruption caused by the woodchip export industry is an important part of the social environment. The proposed woodchip industry based in Coffs Harbour will result in a 30 ton loaded woodchip truck passing through the commercial centre of town every ten minutes. The harbour foreshores will



also be subjected to this intensity of activity resulting in a change from the recreation/retirement nature of this town to an industrial port. The tourist industry in the Coffs Harbour region earns \$14 million per annum for small businesses and employees spread widely throughout the community. The woodchip export industry will only bring \$4 million per annum to this region and benefit will be concentrated in the hands of a small section of the community. The woodchip industry has adversely affected the amenity of local communities in Tasmania and the clearfelling operations seriously deplete the natural attractiveness in a region relying on tourism as an important income. (35)

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## STRUCTURE OF ASSISTANCE TO THE WOOD-BASED INDUSTRIES IN 1969 - 1970

ASIC code	Industry Description	Value Added	Average Nominal Rate on Outputs	Average Nominal Rate on Materials Used	Materials to Output Ratio	Average Effective Rate	Gross Subsidy Equiv.	Net Subsidy Equiv.
		\$M	%	%		%	\$M	\$M
	<u>Wood &amp; Wood Products</u>							
2511	Log sawmilling	121	6	9	0.19	5	9	7
2512	Resawn & dressed timber	52	8	8	0.57	7	9	4
2513	Plywood & manufac- tured boards	39	28	15	0.48	41	21	16
2514	Joinery & wooden structural fittings	70	24	19	0.56	32	39	22
2515	Wooden containers	8	29	6	0.55	57	5	5
2516	Wood, cork, etc., products n.e.c.	16	28	16	0.49	39	9	6
251		306	17	13	0.45	19	-	59
	<u>Paper &amp; paper prod.</u>							
2611	Pulp, paper & paper- board	112	12	5	0.48	18	25	20
2612	Paper bags incl. textile bags	11	36	12	0.71	96	14	10
2613	Solid fibreboard containers	17	52	17	0.61	106	22	18
2614	Corrugated fibreboard containers	27	55	16	0.67	136	45	37
2615	Paper products n.e.c.	30	39	14	0.55	70	26	21
261		197	30	11	0.56	54	-	106

Source - Table 3.4.1 - Industries Assistance Commission Annual Report 1973 - 1974.