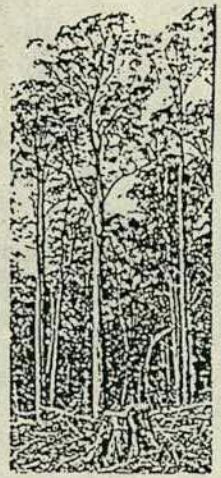


# THE SOUTH EAST FOREST ALLIANCE



## ROUGH ACTIVITY SHEET - SATURDAY 31 MARCH 1990

A summary of who is doing what around the South East Forests campaign. A more complete activity sheet will be put together in about a week and circulated with the draft agenda for the Canberra meeting.

### SOUTH-EAST:

- \* Bega Working Group: continues to meet weekly. David Williams left campaign position on 29th March, to go to Canberra (contact: his parents on 06-288-4095). No replacement currently proposed. Roland doing media (phone & fax: 064-932259).
- \* Bega Environment Network: Richard Barcham now co-ordinating, and assisting with grass-roots forest campaigning (064-923134).
- \* Forest Rescue: Chris & Bridgette, Alf Hewitt, Gerard co-ordinating Tanta house base camp (064-586656). Kai and John are Forest Rescue liaison, living in Canning St house (no phone), working out of Network Centre. Jodie also about.

Forest Rescue operating as autonomous group. No SEFA funding but encouraged to claim surveillance expenses from the \$1000 per month going from SEFA to Working Group for expenses. New surveillance reporting form and procedure still to be developed by A.J. and Forest Rescue.

On The Ground: NSWFC began building Wog Way Stage 2 (gravelling and upgrading) on Tuesday 27 March. Logging has been underway in Yowaka for weeks, also in compartment 1328 on Coolangubra Mountain (a bad one) for about three weeks. Logging continuing in 2453 koala habitat, despite considerable publicity; quote of the year so far to Dr Bob Brown: "Logging Devil's Creek but leaving the manna gums (preferred koala food) is like bombing a city but leaving the restaurants."  
At last report, Wog Way South End platforms and support unstaffed; one/two platforms at North End still staffed. 7 new Forest Rescuers in response to pre-election mailout.

Fulligan's holding "Bands in the Bush" (\$40) over Easter weekend (Robyn & Leo Farrell: 064-967156).

Jim & Moira Collins recovering from election campaign (including a few days off!). Adam Willson going to Bairnsdale to work for CF&L. Election campaign donations still welcome (P.O. Box 207, Bega, 2550).

CANBERRA:

- \* The Wilderness Society: Michael Winer still on deck as campaigner, branch recovering from election. Judy Lambert returning to NLO duties.
- \* Australian Conservation Foundation: Rick Humphries gone to work for Greenpeace as NLO. Paul Rutherford returning to Melbourne. No current ACF NLO.
- \* CCSERAC: Rodney Falconer ensconsed as Director; Sid Walker leaving now election is over, Jim Ekins taking over as forest campaigner. Jim is working on submission to Industry Commission inquiry into paper feedstocks.

SYDNEY:

- \* The Wilderness Society: Karenne Jurd organising internal TWS National Forest Strategy meeting in coming weeks. Margie Law continuing as busy little grass-rooter; WAGON and like bods still a happening thing.
- \* Australian Conservation Foundation: Sue Salmon co-ordinating ACF review of campaign. Anne Reeves, Bruce Diekman, Bridget Berry and all the old crew of the Forest Campaign Group (formerly FAG) still on deck. FCG strategy meeting Wednesday 4 April. John Cameron in Sydney finishing off book, then to tackle ACF dealings with Resource Assessment Commission forest and timber inquiry.
- \* Total Environment Centre: Jeff Angel still here. Sue Kennedy still looking after SEFA finances. Glyn Mather no longer SEFA; working on Wild & Scenic Rivers to the middle of the year, then on tree preservation order grant. New Endangered Species Network officer Sonia has been employed and is working out of TEC (phone: 02-241-1438). Kim Murray retired from SEFA (again) post-election.

A.J. Brown has returned to law studies (part-time) but is working for SEFA three days a week, co-ordinating SEFA evaluation and meeting and available for sundry campaign duties. Judson Agius continues as SEFA fundraiser: has completed targetted appeal to petition signatories, and "The Green Gig", 31st March.

- \* Nature Conservation Council: Currently no Director, Fiona Buining and Barbara Hutton continue to hold fort with assistance of Judy Messer.
- \* North East Forest Alliance: John Corkill co-ordinating Sydney end of NEFA, based at NCC (phone: 02-247-4206). Successful arrestable actions and court injunction protecting Chaelundi, more north coast legal actions in the pipeline.

NB: Catherine Peisley is working for Big Scrub Environment Centre in Lismore, part of NEFA (phone: 066-213278).

MELBOURNE:

- \* The Wilderness Society: Georgie and Jane still on deck on forest-related issues. Moira Finucane on deck for National Estate Wilderness.
- \* Australian Conservation Foundation: Recently new address & phone no: 340 Gore St, Fitzroy; phone: 03-416-1455; fax: 03-416-0767. Karen Alexander in Melbourne as national Environment Manager, Jane Elix now Melbourne-based (?) as Natural Resources Co-ordinator; Peter Allan (Rio) as Victorian/forests campaigner.
- \* East Gippsland Coalition: new phone no at Flinders Lane: 03-650-8011. Janet Rice continues as campaign officer on holiday, returning 2nd April. Jane Scott continues as co-ordinator, David Morton also still around. EGC strategy meeting (part 3) on Wednesday 4th April.

Industry pressure in February produced new "memorandum of interpretation" (?) from Victorian Government on East Gippsland agreement. This appeared to threaten recent achievements, but it has been recently confirmed that agreement does mean 2-year moratorium on logging in National Estate. NB: VFT consortium due to announce route preference in April/May.

Election Campaign Results:

For those who might not have them, attached is summary of TWS/ACF "Vote For The Environment" campaign analysis.

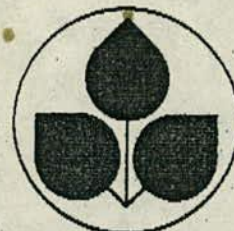
Happy campaigning, all!

  
A. J. Brown

TEC: Phone (02) 241-2523 Fax (02) 247-7118  
Home: (02) 389-8797.



# THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY



# ACF

## "VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT"

Summary of Report on the results of the "Vote for the Environment" campaign  
run by  
The Wilderness Society  
and  
The Australian Conservation Foundation  
in the  
1990 Federal Election

### THE "VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN"

\* The Australian Conservation Foundation and the Wilderness Society targetted 9 marginal electorates with a "Vote for the Environment" campaign advocating a vote for Democrats and selected minor party and Independent green candidates in the House of Representatives and the Senate, with preferences being directed towards the ALP in the House of Representatives.

\* The Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation ran campaigns in the following 9 seats:

Moreton and Fisher in Queensland  
Phillip, St George and Eden-Monaro in NSW  
Deakin and Latrobe in Victoria  
Kingston in South Australia  
Franklin in Tasmania

In addition, the two organisations cooperated closely with the United Tasmania Group in the Tasmanian seat of Denison.

The GOALS of the campaign were:

\*\* to maximise the "green" vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, thus ensuring that environmental issues retain a high political profile after the election, and

recognising that the chances of having minority candidates elected in the House of Representatives were small at this election,

\*\* to have elected to Government the major party with the better environmental policies and record.

Over 3000 people were involved in 5 states. Approximately 1000 people distributed 400,000 leaflets to almost every letterbox in the targetted electorates, while a further 300,000 were distributed by other groups in other electorates.

Rallies and other events, together with a plan of media releases throughout the campaign ensured that the issues and the "Vote for the Environment" campaign maintained a high profile throughout.

On polling day approximately 1600 people staffed most polling booths in the targetted electorates, handing out 50,000 "how-to-vote" cards specific to each electorate. For polling night, the campaign had 400-500 trained people, each working as Democrat or Independent scrutineers, scrutinise vote counting in almost all targetted booths.

As the "how-to-vote" cards in most cases differed from any of those produced by the Democrats, scrutineers were able to report on the number of voters following the recommendations of the "Vote for the Environment" campaign. Detailed computer analysis of the results then followed, with data being taken both from our own scrutineering and from the Electoral Commission's National Tally Room.

The combined expenditure by The Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation was in the order of \$170,000; all money raised by fundraising directly associated with the election or from other non-tax deductible sources.

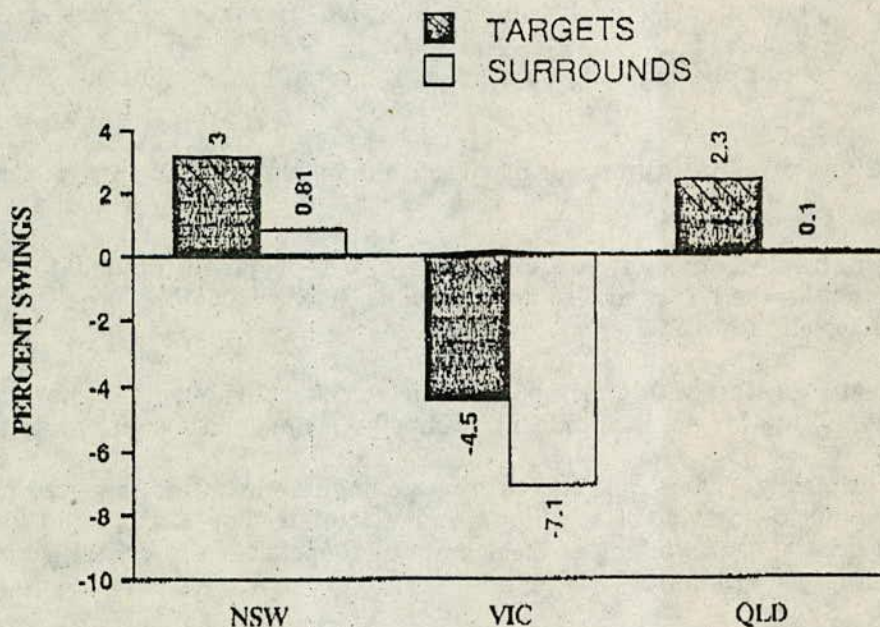
**ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
&  
"VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT" SCRUTINY RESULTS  
FOR TARGETTED MARGINALS**

SEAT	HELD BY	TPP 1987	PERCENT DEMOCRAT VOTE	PREF FLOW AD>ALP	VTFE TICKET	TPP 1990	SWING
DEAKIN	"ALP" <sup>1</sup>	51.5%	16.6	75%	35%	47.2%	-4.3%
DENISON	ALP	53.8%	13.4 <sup>2</sup>	70% <sup>3</sup>	N/A	55.4%	+1.6%
EDEN-MONARO	ALP	54.4%	16.6 <sup>4</sup>	70%	26%	53.7%	-0.8%
FISHER	ALP	50.5%	13.4	68%	33%	52.0%	+1.5%
FRANKLIN	LIB	46.7%	12.6	70% <sup>3</sup>	N/A	47.7%	+1.0%
KINGSTON	ALP	64.2%	26.2	70% <sup>3</sup>	10%	56.9%	-7.3%
LA TROBE	ALP	53.6%	18.6	69%	32%	49.8%	-3.8%
MORETON	LIB	49.3%	13.4	68%	37%	51.8%	+1.8%
PHILLIP	ALP	54.1%	9.3	72%	39%	55.9%	+1.8%
ST GEORGE	ALP	53.7%	9.6	70%	63%	58.5%	+4.8%

**Notes:**

1. Notional, based on redistribution. Formerly Liberal.
  2. Combined UTG and Democrat.
  3. Assumed to be same as the average of fully reported electorates.
  4. Combined Collins and Democrat vote.
- \*\*"N/A": Not available or not applicable.  
\*\*Minor errors are the result of rounding error.

**SWINGS IN TARGETTED AND SURROUNDING MARGINAL SEATS**



## ANALYSIS OF "Vote for the Environment" CAMPAIGN RESULTS

The campaign had a significant effect on voting in the targetted marginal seats and upon the final Senate outcome in each state. Additionally, the use of newspaper advertisements and the publicity associated with the release of the questionnaires ensured that the campaign had an unquantifiable, Australia-wide effect on voting patterns. In addition, electorate-specific campaigns significantly increased the Democrat vote in the electorates and, through this, the final Two-Party Preferred (TPP) vote flowing to the ALP.

\* By several methods of analysis, the "Vote for the Environment" campaign is shown to have shifted 2 to 3% of the vote in the targetted marginal electorates. This is in addition to the effects of the strong campaigns of new green candidates, the overall "osmosis" effect of the "Vote for the Environment" campaign and raised consciousness of environmental issues in the electorate.

\* The Democrat vote in the targetted marginal electorates was 13.5% compared with 10.9% nationally. A similar difference was observed between the targetted marginals and surrounding seats of similar demographics. An additional 2.2% of votes went to other "green" candidates in these electorates.

\* When compared with the 1987 results, the increase in Democrat vote in the targetted marginal electorates was 2% greater than the average increase in the remaining seats Australia-wide.

\* Approximately 38% of Democrat voters in the targetted marginal electorates followed the preference order recommended by the "Vote for the Environment" campaign, rather than either of the tickets recommended by the Democrats themselves.

\* The flow of preferences from the Democrats to the ALP increased from the national average of 60% to an average of 70% in the targetted seats. As a result, the Two-Party Preferred vote for the ALP in the targetted seats was some 3.4% higher than in the rest of Australia.

\* The anti-ALP swing in the Two-Party Preferred vote in the targetted seats was 0.8% less than in the rest of Australia and between 2 and 2.5% better than in surrounding similar seats.

\* In targetted seats the campaign added 2.5% to the Democrat and Independent vote and increased the proportion of such votes giving preferences to the ALP to 70% compared with a national average of 60%.

\* In Moreton the campaign was a deciding factor in winning the seat for the ALP. In Fisher, the campaign moved the seat from a knife-edge balance to a more comfortable margin to the ALP and in Phillip the campaign doubled the swing to the ALP's Jeannette McHugh ahead of outspoken mining industry leader Charles Copeman.

\* In the Senate, Democrats or Green candidates will be elected in every state.

Disillusionment with the two major parties has seen Democrat and green candidates attract 15.6% of the vote nationally. In this election the ultimate beneficiary has been the ALP, since the Two-Party Preferred vote has favoured them. But the time is fast approaching when significant numbers of candidates from outside the traditional two-party system will win House of Representatives seats in their own right and on the basis of environmental and social issues.

\*\*\*\*\*

Prepared by Judy & Geoff Lambert  
The Wilderness Society  
For the Australian Conservation Foundation & The Wilderness Society  
March 27, 1990

AUSTRALIAN EAST COAST FOREST CONFERENCE  
BRISBANE, SATURDAY-SUNDAY 3-4 MARCH 1990

A REPORT ON DAY 1  
-- A. J. BROWN --

1. INTRODUCTION

The East Coast Forest Conference was co-ordinated and introduced by Doug Yuille, Brisbane-based National Estate Wilderness campaigner for the Wilderness Society.

The conference was attended by approximately 50 people including representatives of the Wilderness Society, Australian Conservation Foundation, South East Forest Alliance, North East Forest Alliance, Fraser Island Defenders Organisation, Queensland Conservation Council and the Queensland Wildlife Preservation Society.

Almost all the participants were from Queensland and New South Wales. Representations from national organisations also included discussion of Tasmanian and Victorian forestry issues. No Aboriginal people were present.

The aims of the conference were to share information on forestry issues on Australia's eastern seaboard, attempt to develop unified or complementary objectives and strategies for the protection of forests of biological or heritage significance, develop the forest activists' network, and co-ordinate approaches to the issue of forest protection in the course of the federal election.

\*\* Significant discussion centred on the framework of the environment movement's "national forest strategy". The framework developed in Canberra on 22nd January 1990, at a meeting of ACF, TWS, SEFA, East Gippsland Coalition, FIDO and others, was further developed. Both are attached.

2. OLD-GROWTH FOREST IN NORTH EAST N.S.W.  
Dailan Pugh, North East Forest Alliance

Dailan introduced the issue of protection of old-growth native forest, which became a major theme of the conference.

A number of difficulties in the definition of old-growth forest were identified. Dailan proposed that an old-growth tree could be identified as having reached its maximum height, in the vicinity of 150+ years depending on species. An old-growth forest was identified as being one which had never been logged or had been logged

selectively and continued to contain a "fair proportion" of mature trees.

The significance of old-growth forest for wildlife habitat was recognised. The importance of tree-hollows as arboreal nest sites and of mature tree residue as ground habitat were discussed.

The expansion of woodchipping in north-east NSW was identified as a "cancer" posing the major threat to remaining forests. The expansion of woodchip quotas for Boral at Newcastle (where the mill is operating illegally) and Brisbane Forest Products at Brisbane (where a Commonwealth EIS has never been done) were seen as precursors to proposed pulpmill developments.

The NSW Pulp and Paper Industry Taskforce (1989) identified south-east Queensland and north-east NSW as capable of supplying 1.6 million tonnes of pulpwood. This is currently regarded as the minimum viable quota for a world-scale kraft pulpmill, with Grafton remaining the most likely site.

Dailan reported that 2-4% of remaining native forests in north-east NSW could be classed as old-growth. 3 years remain before the last of these areas will have been logged or roaded according to Forestry Commission plans.

### 3. THE NORTH EAST FOREST ALLIANCE John Corkill, North East Forest Alliance

NEFA is an informal grass-roots organisation, committed to the protection and proper management of native forests in the area of NSW north of Sydney and east of the Great Dividing Range.

John reported that NEFA had no bank account or central organisation, and consisted of groups concerned with monitoring forestry activities in their specific area.

Recent highlights of the NEF campaign included a demonstration in opposition to the formation of a Forest Protection Society (i.e. Robyn Lloydell and friends) in Grafton and co-ordinated actions in opposition to Boral. Approaching events included a non-violent action to protect an old-growth forest area currently under attack, and a visit by Senator Richardson scheduled for Grafton.

John made a distinction between the SEF and NEF campaigns because "there are far fewer National Estate forests on the north coast than the south coast".

John also outlined a court action in progress regarding management of forests adjacent to the World Heritage Area at Barrington Tops, and 7-8 challenges in the offing for the Forestry Commission to produce EISS for proposed old-growth logging.

The 1982 Wran rainforest protection decision was reviewed. The result of the 1982 decision was that 21% of mature rainforests in northern NSW were in National Parks - an increase of only 5-6%. It was argued that the victory was not as large as history suggests, and that compromises in the latter stages of the campaign were unnecessary and had caused problems since.

John also said that at the moment the management of World Heritage areas was so bad (including the role of the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service) that it was not yet possible to challenge government agencies for better protection measures for adjacent/buffer forests.

#### 4. FROM RAINFORESTS TO VOTE FOR THE FORESTS

John Seed, Rainforest Information Centre, Lismore

John Seed opened by outlining the need for Australia to clean up its domestic act on forests. As the world's only developed country with rainforest remaining, Australia has a special role to play in campaigning for international rainforest protection. The concept of a "Rainforest Ambassador" was raised.

John described as the Australian situation that rainforests are protected nowhere. He cited Queensland's proposed Tully-Millstream hydroelectric project, where part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area is threatened, and Victoria, where government definitions left the bulk of rainforest systems unidentified and unprotected. He said that a bold move to total rainforest protection was required, similar to New Zealand's landmark decision to oppose the visits of nuclear ships.

It was argued that the community was in direct (70-90%) support of rainforest protection, and that Australia is one of the most rainforest-aware countries in the world. It was also argued that the approaching federal election was the last one that could have a major impact in the saving of the last rainforests and old-growth, and that it is time to demand protection for the lot.

Thailand was cited as an example of a country where it was not until only 17% of native forest was left and land degradation problems had reached nightmare proportions that effective government action was taken.

John outlined the RIC initiated "VOTE FOR THE FORESTS" campaign. This did not involve endorsement of any candidates, but promotion of the protection of all remaining old-growth forests (as compared to the inadequate 1982 rainforest claims).

The "VOTE FOR THE FORESTS" campaign included production of six stickers, radio carts featuring well-known personalities, factsheets, and an action in support of the Penan people planned for Monday 5 March. John also emphasised the role of the Pegasus communications network in facilitating the development of the campaign.

In questions, John Seed was asked how he would respond to claims that a call for total protection of old-growth forest meant loss of jobs. John responded that his personal opinion was that when jobs were lost in other unconscionable industries (e.g. the East German or Rumanian Securitate recently), there was little outcry. He stated a personal opinion that 10% of people were unemployed in Australia, and that it was the wrong 10%.

John Corkill responded, with support from Karenne Jurd and others, that the jobs argument had to be recognised as a red herring. There was enormous potential for expanded employment in a truly sustainable forest industry - as opposed to the current LOGGING industry. It was argued that employment had fallen since the advent of increased automation in the industry, and that this trend would be reversed if plantation schemes and other initiatives were maximised, simultaneous to the protection of old-growth forests.

#### 5. BEING VISIONARY

Dr Aila Keto, Rainforest Conservation Society

Dr Keto gave a personal perspective on forest protection. She described it as a tragedy that environmentalists and scientists seemed continually cornered into fighting for the last stands of biologically important areas, rather than giving the community a broader vision of where environmental protection is heading.

Dr Keto said that we should remember the magnitude and significance of the evolutionary events that have given us our forests. We need to identify the history of Australia's unique and threatened/dying megafauna, and, in parallel, see native forests as a megaflore in the same condition.

Dr Keto said that "we really need to shift from a cornered position to that of the defenders of what is surviving of an entire evolutionary era."

Environmentalists needed to be prophets and visionaries, and never be ashamed of adopting this role. We needed to remember that our own biological history was pitiful in the scheme of things, only extending for 200,000 years.

Dr Keto identified a number of "myths that refused to go away" in forestry management. The principal one was the

myth of "sustained yield"; others were that forests needed disturbance in the form of logging to promote biological diversity, etc.. She said some of her work on these topics is soon to be published in the Australian Journal of Ecology.

Biologically, the concept of sustained yield was impossible unless we are prepared to transform native forests into tree-farms. Dr Keto asked whether we had learnt anything from the agricultural revolution, and suggested that we should have learnt that if we required a product, we should now know that we had to grow it, and grow it in an ecologically acceptable way.

As an example, Dr Keto said that sustained yield management of rainforests was identifiably a myth, because there are no examples of "successful" logging of rainforest regrowth. To date, 60-70 year management cycles in rainforest had simply involved picking over what had been left after earlier logging.

Dr Keto said that fieldwork in Queensland had identified some of the ways in which forestry services manipulate the data in favour of the sustained yield myth. She said that the size and interpretation of "growth and yield" plots of old-growth forest within logged areas were allowing forestry services to sustain the myth.

She said that environmentalists and independent scientists needed to be clamouring for the raw data and actively reviewing the fieldwork of industry-based research, and never to trust such research unless that data had been reviewed.

Dr Keto also highlighted the role of personal experience of our forests as a crucial key in education and development of concern about them.

## 6. THE SOUTH EAST FORESTS STORY, PART 1

### A. J. Brown, South East Forest Alliance

A.J. Brown presented the South East Forests campaign as an example of a campaign that had spent a long period in "cornered" mode, but had recently struggled to help develop a broader Australia-wide vision on the forests.

A.J. also introduced the South East Forest Alliance as a "formal disorganisation" as opposed to NEFA's "informal organisation". SEFA had evolved as a non-grass roots alliance of principal environment groups. Various problems with the campaign were identified as stemming from inadequate integration of mass grass-roots peaceful resistance and SEFA's narrower decision-making process.

A.J. principally described the "cornered" phase of the campaign, which coincided with the mass peaceful resistance campaign launched on 27 February 1989.

He described the achievements of this phase as enabling thousands of people to touch and involve themselves with the forests for the first time, and provide an active outlet for the new wave of environmental consciousness. The community was now looking beyond the obvious waste and economic obscenity of woodchipping, and looking to what was being lost. The results of this activity were now becoming evident in changing public opinion.

The South East Forests had also provided the continuation of the Tasmanian battle for old-growth forests onto the mainland. East Gippsland had very successfully achieved another leap in consciousness, its proximity to Eden creating the "South East Australian forests" and "great escarpment" concepts, demonstrating clearly how the issue transcends State boundaries.

A.J. also outlined the problems in evaluating the campaign, effectively communicating with and educating the public and effecting political change. He emphasised the need for a communication and decision-making process and planning that enabled development of a broader campaign vision, and integrated policy direction, community education and grass-roots action.

7. THE SOUTH EAST FORESTS STORY, PART 2  
Karenne Jurd, The Wilderness Society

(To follow).

8. THE SEXY ISSUE OF NATIVE VEGETATION RETENTION  
Jane Elix, Natural Resources Co-ordinator,  
Australian Conservation Foundation

Jane introduced her background in land degradation issues, pointing out how difficult it had been to arouse public concern and political action on "non-sexy" issues like land degradation, as opposed to "sexy" issues like forests. She introduced the broader issue of native vegetation retention as unsexy in the extreme.

There is an urgent need for environmentalists and the community to address the full range of land management issues relating to native flora and fauna retention. Just as there is a continuum of vegetation types, a continuum of management approaches is required.

Jane highlighted the fact that 27% of native forests on the eastern seaboard were on private land, and stressed the need to include all forests in our concerns, despite the complexity of property rights and the rights of individuals. Vegetation campaigns needed to come to grips with the phenomenon of the "Australian rural landholder", including a dominant ethos comprising rugged individuality and the pioneering spirit.

She also said that forest campaigns had to come to grips with the whole gamut of policy instruments and campaign activities involved in vegetation retention. A holistic view should tackle contradictions such as current Federal Government financial support for tree-planting, while States (Queensland and NSW in particular) were continuing to permit tree-clearing activities. We also have to look beyond government reserves as a sole means of vegetation retention, and look to other means such as negotiation of voluntary agreements with landholders, and participation in Landcare initiatives.

Jane suggested that forest-related campaigns look to government assistance from funding programs such as the National Soil Conservation Program, to facilitate a broader approach to the problem.

In questions, John Corkill drew attention to "profit a prendre" issues, such as the practice developing in NSW where leasehold Crown forests were being alienated to private hands, but forestry agencies were retaining timber rights for 10 years.

Karenne Jurd pointed out parallel problems with Aboriginal land where legislative provisions were protecting forestry and other detrimental land use interests.

#### 9. CAPE YORK

Mark Horstmann, Australian Conservation Foundation

Mark gave a detailed exposition of the dilemmas facing Cape York, highlighting wilderness areas at Jardine River and Shelburne Bay, and the monsoonal vine forests of Iron Range and McIlwraith Range. He also mentioned the extensive mangrove and wetland systems around the cape, the importance of these areas to distribution and abundance of salt-water crocodiles, and the fact that the cape features 17 major rivers, none of which have been altered by dams or weirs.

Mark emphasised that the monsoonal vine forests, 300 kilometres north of the Wet Tropics, were a unique tie between the forest systems of New Guinea and Australia, and had never been properly investigated for their biological properties.

Threats to Cape York's forests are extensive, including timber leases, cattle leases, goldmining leases, the amount of forest held by one American entrepreneur in particular, and the Temple Bay spaceport and associated tourist development.

The National Estate issue is very important, because all the Cape's forest systems are on the Register of the National Estate. However, the trend towards National Park protection for National Estate areas was highly problematic.

National Parks were not seen as accommodating the valid concerns of the Cape's 12 Aboriginal communities (all of whom, however, were opposed to the spaceport).

Current National Park management was also seen as a problem, with 12% of Cape York already under National Park as opposed to Queensland's 2.2%. (It was also pointed out that Queensland has more land under State control than any place outside the USSR.) Current National Parks had few ecological boundaries, and included grazing and oil exploration leases. There were also currently only 3 rangers for the entire Cape, and the support base for 1 additional ranger would cost \$300,000.

Mark emphasised that land-use decision-making had to include a genuine role for Aboriginal people (and other locals to some extent). But he said that the sort of protection scheme being mooted for the eastern half of the Cape was an "integrated biosphere reserve", with various land-use zonings, akin to the Kakadu concept.

In questions, Aboriginal participation was further discussed. Doug Yuille asked about the role of Aboriginal people in the forests' fire regime, and specifically whether ACF had a policy on such issues. Dailan Pugh emphasised that the fire issue was very important, because the Forestry Commission was destroying natural forest understorey systems with intensive and frequent fires, when his information was that e.g. brushbox forest naturally went approximately 350 years between major fires.

Jane Elix responded that ACF did not have a policy on Aboriginal use of fire, but was employing an Aboriginal Liaison Officer to investigate this issue among others. This was seen as important but not a priority.

Mark Horstmann also pointed out the importance of feral animal management issues to Aboriginal people, because in some areas they now depended largely in some areas on feral animals as a food supply.

Apart from a planned stand-by RAAF base, no major road up-grading threats were identified. Grazing was identified as a major threat. New Guinea's Ok Tedi mine,

and the pollution levels pouring into the Fly and Ok Tedi Rivers, was seen as posing a major threat to the shallow waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria and the prawn industry there, the Great Barrier Reef and associated wetland systems around the Cape.

John Corkill asked if international wetland agreements could be used to protected the Cape, including migratory birds agreements. The answer was yes.

10. DISCUSSION OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

In further discussion after Cape York, the issue of scientific and legislative frameworks for designating and enforcing ecological protection was extended.

In reponse to the biosphere reserve suggestion for Cape York, John Corkill asked whether this raised the issue of entirely new legislative provisions and arrangements for enforcement of public roles in land management; the answer was yes.

Karenne pointed out that the "integrated biosphere reserve" concept seemed similar to another "West Australian Kimberley Aboriginal-Owned National Park" concept. In order to make progress in this area we had to shift ourselves from the limits of a state/property-based legislative framework and move towards major constitutional reform.

Jane Elix suggested that we could not afford to put all our eggs in one basket e.g. constitutional reform, and that we should continue to work at state and federal levels while working to tighten up and co-ordinate the states on land use management issues.

Back on Cape York, Mark Horstmann argued that, like Antartica, there needed to be a biogeographical regional approach to environmental protection for northern Australia - Cape York, the northern Northern Territory and the Kimberley.

In relation to greenhouse, various speakers pointed out the importance of tackling land tenure issues to enable ecological management of freehold and leasehold forest/natural areas, facilitating species transition as temperatures and habitat viabilities changed over time.

John Seed reported that David Cameron was working on this approach in relation to rainforest evolution in Victoria.

Dailan Pugh identified these issues as the basis for the Great Escarpment management scheme for sections of the eastern seaboard, especially in the south-east corner. It was felt that just as ecological bridges between north

Queensland and New Guinea should be recognised, so the Great Escarpment concept needed to include Tasmania.

Karenne Jurd reported that many if not all of these issues were currently receiving attention from a growing section of the scientific community. It was recognised that treating the eastern seaboard as a biogeographical region made sense in terms of the range of latitudes, altitudes and climatic conditions that supported an enormous range of contiguous ecological domains. Karenne reported that the framework for an Australian eastern edge conservation plan could be developed by mid-April.

#### 11. WORKSHOPS

Day 1 of the conference finished with a number of workshops:

- \* National Forest Strategy: results attached.
- \* Tully-Millstream hydroelectric project, Queensland.
- \* Fraser Island logging, proposed actions.

A. J. Brown  
7 March 1990

## ATTACHMENT

## -- NATIONAL FOREST STRATEGY --

CANBERRA, 22nd January 1990:

1. Immediate and full protection of all National Estate forests.
2. Identification and secure protection of other native forests of high conservation value.
3. Suspension of all forestry operations in those areas while under investigation.
4. Immediate restructuring of the total forest industry to maximise employment opportunities while moving to an ecologically sustainable, plantation-based industry.

BRISBANE, 4th March 1990:

The Federal Government to recognise the global ecological crisis and take urgent action to:

Identify and securely protect all native forests including, but not restricted to, National Estate forests, wilderness areas, rainforests, old growth forests and other areas of high biological and heritage value regardless of land tenure;

by:

1. Immediately suspending all forestry operations and other detrimental activities in forests whose significance and or classification requires investigation.
2. Banning the export of woodchips and adopting a national strategy and incentives for establishing an ecologically sustainable domestic pulp and paper industry.
3. Banning the import of rainforest and old-growth timbers into this country.
4. Immediately restructuring the total forest industry to maximise employment opportunities while moving to an ecologically sustainable, plantation-based industry.
5. Providing adequate resources for comprehensive co-ordinated research into the ecology and status of natural Australian ecosystems, with this research to be made public.
6. Using any available Commonwealth constitutional powers and acquiring additional powers to enforce protection of the environment by amendment to the Constitution of Australia through referenda.