

**Letter to: Honourable Bob Carr, Premier of NSW 1995 – 2005**  
**Prue Acton 5<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

Dear Mr. Carr

The South East Regional Conservation Alliance is a group of some 20 local, regional and city conservation groups that has commenced a renewed campaign to bring an end to woodchipping of our native forests.

We note that this past year you had the vision to encourage protection of River Red gums in the Riverina and we know that you achieved significant protection of the east coast forests during your time as Premier.

Unfortunately, you were not able to bring an end to woodchipping of the forests and the associated clearfell industrial logging. This has been the position not only in NSW but also Victoria and Tasmania over the past 10 years under the Regional Forest agreements brokered by the Howard Government

The Global Financial Collapse together with growing resistance from wholesale paper buyers to paper produced from native forest woodchips has dramatically affected the Tasmanian logging industry and has also had negative impacts in Victoria and NSW.

Timber companies, including Boral in NSW, are reacting by seeking Forest Stewardship Council approval of their sources and operations, Forest conservationists groups utterly oppose this given the history of these companies and the continuing woodchip logging of old growth and high conservation value forests.

At last there is a significant opportunity to restructure the industry in these three states and to finally follow the lead of Peter Beatie in South East Queensland 10 years ago and move the industry out of native forests completely with an immediate exit from woodchipping. The reality of global warning and the need to conserve our forests in the battle against climate change makes this a moment that has to be seized.

The woodchip industry is also seeking a new, second market through burning so called woodchip waste to produce electricity. This of course is just a foot in the door to build an even more appalling woodchip industry. We understand you specifically promised in 2002 that native forest biomass would not be burnt for electricity and subsequently introduced legislation to make sure this did not happen. However, the Eden Woodchip Mill is now applying to build a woodchip fired power station and moves are afoot for similar stations in Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia.

We are hopeful that you will support actively the renewed campaign to finally end woodchipping in native forests and in so doing put an end to the new threat from burning the forests for electricity.

We would greatly appreciate the opportunity to have a detailed discussion with you about how we might work together to achieve these aims.

Prue Acton OBE