

South Coast People Native Title Claimants
C/- NTSCORP Limited
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44-70 Rosehill Street
REDFERN NSW 2016

The Hon David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
David.Littleproud.MP@aph.gov.au

Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion
Minister for Indigenous Affairs
nigel.scullion@ia.pm.gov.au

The Hon Melissa Price MP
Minister for Environment
Melissa.Price.MP@aph.gov.au

11 November 2018

Dear Ministers,

RE: FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND NATIVE TITLE

I write on behalf of the South Coast People regarding our Native Title Claim (NNTT number: NC2017/003) lodged on 3 August 2017 and accepted and registered on 31 January 2018 and the failure of the NSW Government to negotiate with us regarding proposed changes that would affect our claimed country, including seas.

FORESTRY:

Despite our efforts over many months, Forestry Corporation of NSW have failed to negotiate with our people regarding proposed changes to the Regional Forest Agreements (RFA's) and Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOAs) here on the South Coast of NSW. They have indicated that they are negotiating with Local Aboriginal Land Councils, but it is not acceptable, and we believe illegal, that they are totally ignoring us.

Any changes proposed to RFAs, IFOAs and even Wood Supply Agreements (WSAs) can have a significant impact on the public lands that we have claimed and we believe that it is incumbent upon NSW Department of Primary Industry, NSW Environment Protection Authority and Forestry Corporation of NSW to enter meaningful negotiations with us regarding these changes in the management of our state forests.

We asked Forestry Corporation of NSW to allow one of our independent cultural officers to undertake a cultural assessment of Corunna State Forest Compartment 3058 before harvesting commenced a few weeks ago and our officer was refused permission to enter the compartment. This is also completely unacceptable.

FISHERIES:

NSW Fisheries also refuse to acknowledge Section 211 of the Native Title Act 1993 and continue to prosecute our members for exercising our traditional fishing rights here on the south coast of NSW. Even though the exercise of our rights is defined as a "class of activity" under the Act, the NSW Government seems to believe that Section 211 doesn't apply. This is unnecessarily frustrating our

claimants and their families where they are legitimately exercising their native title rights and interests for the purpose of satisfying their personal, domestic or non-commercial communal needs.

SUMMARY:

It appears that NSW Department of Primary Industry may feel that they can ignore our native title rights as claimants. We are very upset that this has happened and we ask you to intervene so that our rights are respected. We ask that proper respect be paid to our claim and you instruct the NSW Government to undertake the required consultation with us before the RFAs, IFOAs or WSAs are put in place. We also ask that you do everything you can to get the message through to the NSW Government and their agency NSW Fisheries that they must take Section 211 of the Native Title Act seriously and allow our claimants to exercise their Native Title rights with regards to fishing and gathering seafood for our community.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wally Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Wally Stewart

On behalf of South Coast People Native Title Claimants

cc:

Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Joel.Fitzgibbon.MP@aph.gov.au

Hon Bill Shorten MP

Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

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Hon Tony Burke MP

Shadow Minister for Environment and Water

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