

Open Letter to Mr Daniel Tuan, Regional Manager, Forests NSW. 21.07.2012

LOGGING IN TANJA STATE FOREST

You have approved logging of Tanja State Forest to commence within a couple of weeks. The destruction of the forest is intended to yield 6,000 tonnes of woodchips.

May I remind you that Forests NSW has not yet responded to a resolution passed at a public meeting in Tathra on 11 October 2011?

In part, that resolution was:

That Forests NSW immediately halt all logging in Tanja State Forest until independent scientific surveys establish beyond doubt that: No harm was done to the forest, the wildlife, the topsoil and the surrounding waterways by the previous round of logging in the Tanja State Forest.

Until we have an honest, independent answer to that question there is no justification for further logging, especially at a time when there is not a market for native forest woodchips.

Forests NSW, politicians and the logging industry repeatedly defend woodchip logging as "sustainable." I challenge you to prove it.

Compulsory fauna surveys are routinely carried out BEFORE logging, but no research is ever done afterwards to find out whether the measures applied to protect wildlife, soils and water actually work.

Forests NSW has a moral obligation to ensure this research is done before it permits further logging in Tanja Forest.

The "Harvest Plan" which you have signed, giving formal approval to log Tanja includes results of fauna surveys. These allegedly found just two threatened species, the Sooty Owl and the Yellow Bellied Glider. This is scarcely credible to local residents (including myself) who are very familiar with the local wildlife and previous records of over 20 threatened species, including the koala.

Your surveys, for example, could not even find the Powerful Owl, which is heard almost every night by neighbours on all sides of the logging compartments, including me.

However, supposing the surveys were accurate, what would that they tell us about the impacts of past logging? It would confirm to me that logging kills animals, and that if the 20+ threatened species previously recorded in Tanja Forest are no longer present, there is one obvious culprit: logging.

If the fauna surveys are wrong, Forests NSW has a lot of explaining to do. If they are right, Forests NSW has even more explaining to do.

Either way, you owe it to the local community and the forest wildlife to halt the logging now until you can prove it truly is "sustainable."

Yours sincerely

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