

SOUTH EAST REGION CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS OF 2011

1. South East Forest Rescue (SEFR) and the Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) had the Bega Valley Shire Council's decision approving a wood pellet plant overturned. This was based on the grounds that the Council didn't consider the content in the public submissions, the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development and the zoning of the land.

Members of several South East Region Conservation Alliance's (SERCA) groups sent submissions to the Bega Valley Shire Council regarding the Eden Woodchip Mill Pellet Plant.

2. Members of several SERCA groups sent submissions to the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications' Inquiry into the status, health and sustainability of Australia's koala population Far SE NSW contributors. Three people spoke at the Senate's public hearings in Canberra and Melbourne.
3. Members of several SERCA groups sent submissions supporting the application of a member of the local Aboriginal community for the protection of Mumbulla and Murrah State Forests under Section 10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Heritage Protection Act . A final decision is pending.
4. Chipstop instigated a campaign against the owners of the Eden Woodchip mill, Nippon paper, to draw attention to the abuse of native forests for paper production. Chipstop established a rogue Nippon Paper website. Nippon Paper's challenge of Chipstop's use of the domain name <www.nipponpaper.net> in the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva was defeated.
5. SERCA's campaign against natural forest's inclusion in Renewable Energy Target was critical in supporting the Greens in adding this to Clean Energy Future.
6. SEFR systematically records breaches of forestry logging operations and tables these with the EDO. As a result, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW commissioned the EDO to compile a statewide report demonstrating how ForestsNSW fails to comply with legal obligations.
7. Travelling photographic exhibition, *Natural Forests' Australia's Wilderness Coast*, received national press and was visited by thousands of people in Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Bermagui and Bodalla.
8. Mumbulla koala campaign received world wide press and SEFR found that illegal logging of an Aboriginal Place led to big wins in court cases costing the State government \$110,000. Charges, which activists received from defending the Mumbulla State Forests, resulted in only 2 convictions from 35 defended charges.

9. Friends of Chinnock Tanja forest campaign against Forest NSW has temporarily, at least, halted logging in the Tanja Forest twice.
10. Possibly due to the impact of increased public awareness of local damage to the environment, the Greens had the best ever result in the Bega State electorate, with a forest activist, civil disobedience protagonist? as candidate.
11. Despite having suffered extensive damage in many areas of the Bermagui State Forest near the Bermagui village, the Five Forests group ran a campaign which at least saved what is popularly known as the 'cathedral of trees' through which residents and tourists drive into the village.
12. SERCA supported Nature.Net's Forest Forum in ACT which brought together scientists, environmentalists and politicians to inform the public about forest issues and invite panel participation. There have been many conservation related public meetings, fora and activist events throughout the year.
13. SERCA is one of four groups appealing the State and Federal governments' approval of a gold mine at Dargues Reef, Majors Creek. Two weeks ago, SERCA became the first group to lodge its appeal with the EDO regarding this environmentally damaging gold mine.
14. In 2003 a few activists occupied the woodchip carrier, Keisho Maru, preventing it from leaving Eden. In 8 years it has not come returned to Eden again. The ship carried the first load of Eden chips to a Forest Stewardship Council certified mill after Nippon got certification, so it was an historic action in retrospect.
15. Additional to the eighty-six media releases, letters to media, letters to government, submissions to government published on SERCA's website, are the countless letters sent by citizens of the Far South Coast community to local, state and federal members in their endeavours to save our forests.
16. SERCA's website received a make over. <www.serca.org.au/index.html>