

REPORT ON THE MORUYA FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM Held on 29 November 2008 at the CWA Hall



Part of the more than 60 in the audience



Dr John Kaye speaking at the Moruya forum



The 5 presenters left to right:
Sheila Monahan, Dr John Kaye, Heather Kenway,
Mark Fleming, Dr Judith Ajani

The public forum on “The Role Of Natural Native Forests In Combating Climate Change” sponsored by Coastwatchers and the Eurobodalla Greens was well timed. It coincided with the opening of the UN climate talks in Poznan, Poland where officials from developing countries are demanding that richer countries make emissions cuts of between 25 and 40 per cent if they want to secure a global climate agreement in Copenhagen in 2009.

The more than 60 people who attended the public forum found out how this could be achieved in Australia at a relatively low cost. Presentations were heard on the Green Carbon report; Dr Judith Ajani's research on the move from native forests to plantations for Australia's wood and fibre needs; and Dr John Kaye's investigation into the consequences of using biomass burners to produce electricity. Heather Kenway also gave a run down of the progress so far in SERCA's natural native forest campaign.

As the forum was held the day after South East Fibres Export (SEFE) announced that they had obtained the \$20 million dollars required to build a biomass burner in the grounds of the Eden chipmill there was special interest in John Kaye's contribution.

He has done calculations to show that for each unit of energy produced by wood fired power, the amount of carbon dioxide released is at least six times that generated by the equivalent amount of coal fired power. It will take 80 years of regrowth for a forest to recapture and neutralise the carbon dioxide emissions from biomass burning. These calculations are currently in the process of being refined.

Additionally he confirmed that it was thermodynamically impossible to have zero air pollution from any thermo electric power station and that power produced by this method will be expensive.

One of the indicators of a successful forum was the number of people that stayed on after lunch for a panel discussion than ran until 2.30 pm.

Resolutions were drawn up in relation to the three tiers of government. They were passed unanimously.

1. This meeting acknowledges the critically important role that our native South East Forests play in protecting the natural environment that we cherish in this region of South East NSW.

These forests when protected, maintain :

- * The highest level of water catchment health
- * The diverse, interdependent and intricate web of life
- * Capture and store the highest levels of carbon in its safest form
- * And mitigate against the consequences of global warming induced climate change.

2. This meeting acknowledges and condemns the NSW Government for its failure to heed wide-spread community concerns over the mismanagement of our valuable public native forests and calls on the Government to stop the degradation of these forests and cease the unsustainable logging of native forests.
3. We call on the NSW Government to protect and enhance our valuable timber production industry by immediate transitioning to use of the plantation forest resource.
4. Furthermore, this meeting expresses our community's grave concern that our native South East Forests not be used as a biomass burning fuel source for erroneously called 'Green Power' and fed into the furnace.
5. We call on the Australian Government to exclude native forests as an eligible component in the Expanded National Renewable Energy Target (ENRET). Additionally, we ask the Government to include our native forests in the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) and adopt REDD, to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in Australia, as a priority.
6. We call on the Australian Government advocate internationally for the adoption of REDD for all nations.
7. We call on the Australian and NSW Governments to reject the use of native forests as a fuel source for any biomass burning power generation schemes and to legislate accordingly.
8. This meeting calls on Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Shire Councils to support their respective communities in advocating for the protection of the South East Forests.
9. We ask that Eurobodalla and Bega Valley Shire Councils assure their respective communities that the Local Environment Plans that will soon be available for public comment do not include any provision for the logging of forests as a feedstock for biomass burning power generation. Additionally, we seek assurances that forest fuelled biomass burning power stations are not an allowable or legitimate activity in the Local Environment Plans.
10. In light of what we now know of carbon storage and capture by temperate eucalypt forests we call on the NSW Government to cancel the Southern and Eden Regional Forest Agreements.
11. We call on the State and Federal Governments to end native forest logging.