

MEDIA RELEASE: Environmentalists Challenge Abbott on Marine and Forests Conservation 18th August 2010

Conservation protesters made their presence felt at Narooma wharf yesterday as they challenged Tony Abbott and Liberal Candidate David Gazard on their Environment policies. David Gazard is the Liberal candidate for the bellwether seat of Eden Monaro and a former Abbott staffer.

"Eden Monaro voters and the Australian public are being severely let down by Tony Abbott and David Gazard who are pushing dangerous policies for our oceans and forests," said John Perkins, spokesperson for the South East Region Conservation Alliance.

"Mr. Abbott is not being serious about the natural environment These policies are really irresponsible, unsustainable resource exploitation not genuine environmental policies at all."

"Mr. Abbot blew into Narooma in an attempt to polarize the community on desperately needed Marine Reserves in offshore waters controlled by the Commonwealth"

"They are short changing future tourism opportunities by also supporting the industrial logging and woodchipping of significant native forests, resulting in the export of sediments from logged areas to our coastal estuaries, which affects the critical fish nurseries as well as other downstream industries such as oyster growers."

"There was no real recognition by Messrs Abbott and Gazard of degradation – to our carbon rich forests, to wild life including koalas threatened with regional extinction, to rivers, to the ocean, to fisheries - in short to the delicate balance of human activities and the natural environment," said national identity, businesswoman, artist and local Merimbula resident Prue Acton OBE

"At the urging of David Gazard, the Coalition has supported the Guillard Government in Parliament to woodchip and burn native forests for electricity production and to receive Renewable Energy Credits for these operations, enabling them to unfairly compete against true renewables such as solar, wind and wave." said Harriet Swift of regional forest protection group CHIPSTOP.

"It appears highly likely that with both the Liberal and Labor Parties out to lunch on the environment that the first of these environmental disasters will be established at Eden, the birthplace of Australian woodchipping," said Noel Plumb of anti-woodchip group ChipBusters

"We suggest Mr. Abbott and Mr. Gazard are misreading the electorate, whilst chasing a few anti Marine Park voters and a tiny fraction of the electorate who rely on the woodchip industry, people who seem to have established a natural and destructive alliance."

"We hope that Tony Abbott and David Gazard got the message – the environment increasingly matters here on the south coast of NSW. It's a changing demographic; new people, including retirees from Canberra, are coming to live and work here for the natural beauty rather than to exploit its finite resources."

For further comment: -

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