

MEDIA RELEASE: Mike Kelly tells voters Labor will resist industry pressure for native forests to be eligible for Renewable Energy Credits. SERCA. Prue Acton. 4 August 2013

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Mike Kelly tells voters Labor will resist industry pressure for native forests to be eligible for Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) at the Meet the Candidates forum in Bermagui, organized by Clean Energy For Eternity, on Saturday 4 August, 2013.

Responding to a question from the South East Region Conservation Alliance (SERCA) spokesperson, Prue Acton, "Will Labor guarantee to continue to block any change allowing Renewable Energy Credits for native forests?" Dr. Mike Kelly, member for bellwether seat, Eden Monaro and if Labor wins the just announced election, Minister for Defense designate, said Labor is committed to its position.

Prue Acton, spokesperson for SERCA prefaced the question, "Our native forests face a new danger with industry demands to make electricity in wood fired power plants and call it "renewable energy."

"Here in the Southern Koala Forests we have had over forty years of woodchipping degrading our forests."

"Now the market wants plantations for paper. Native forest loggers are desperate to find a new market – burning forests for power,." said Ms. Acton

"The retail electricity sellers rightly call this "Dead Koala Power".

"The NSW government is now proposing to allow whole trees to be used for power," said Ms. Acton

Coalition candidate, Peter Hendy offered no change in policy, and will continue to advocate eligibility of native forests for Renewable Energy Credits.

After receiving a positive indication from Dr. Kelly, Ms. Acton later said, "If governments allowed our forests to be used for biomass, imagine the projected 200,000 international visitors per annum arriving on passenger liners into the beautiful deep water harbor of Twofold Bay at Eden, to see massive piles of woodchips and a huge chimney stack from a wood fired electricity plant?"

"And to find out the temperate forests they were seeing- home to the critically endangered Southern Koala- were being trashed to feed this furnace!"

“Australia forests and wildlife are not renewable, for example, our Southern Koalas are on the brink of extinction. Around 60 have recently found in the State forests from Gulaga to Mumbulla and they need everyone’s protection.”

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