



South East Region Conservation Alliance Inc

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The Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC
Shadow Minister for Planning, Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Via email: penny.sharpe@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Sharpe,

RE: NSW REGIONAL FOREST AGREEMENTS

SERCA is an umbrella group of conservation organisations covering South-East NSW. We write to express our very serious concerns with the processes currently underway by the NSW Government to bring about the renewal of the Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) and ask that you seek intervention to bring some ethics and equity to these processes.

Firstly, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) called for submissions on its 384 page propaganda, the 2nd and 3rd five yearly reviews of the RFAs, just before Christmas with submissions closing on 23rd February. These reviews were due 9 and 4 years ago respectively and will now form the basis of the decisions regarding the future of the RFAs. We're appalled that the period to respond to them covers a time when many people are on holidays or working very hard in our high tourism season. As you will see in the attached paper prepared by one of our members "*Questioning Ethics, Justice, Legality and Credibility of the State Government's Public Submission Process on the Regional Forest Agreements*", the reading list for this process requires digesting 411,134 words and making sense of endless industry jargon before being able to develop a submission.

We accept that it's probably not possible to send this report back to the departments to be completed properly but **we do ask you to request that more time be provided to those wishing to make a submission, allowing us the time necessary to digest this material and develop our responses.**

The second process being orchestrated by the Department of Primary Industry (DPI) seeking feedback on renewal of the RFAs is running simultaneously with the EPA 2nd and 3rd five yearly reviews where those review processes should be well and truly over before even considering the RFA renewals. This is unethical and totally unfair. The inadequacies of the published review report MUST be identified, independently assessed and addressed before any consideration is given to extending the RFAs.

We hereby also earnestly request that you do everything you can to delay this DPI consultation process until the full EPA review process is completed.

We look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,

Seán Burke
Hon. Secretary
South East Region Conservation Alliance