

RE: Timber Optimisation Hub Development Application 10-2020-81-1

I am concerned that this DA ignores recent bushfire impacts on forests intended to supply the Eden chip mill. The “Biodiversity and EPBC Act Protected Matters Report” was written before the fires. In the summer fires 80% of the forests available for logging were burnt, and an estimated billion animals killed. These forests were already over logged. There are doubts as to whether the forests can supply enough timber to make the mill viable. The granting of the DA will stop a transition to plantations for the woodchopping industry and will increase native forest logging which has already degraded forests. The forests in the region need time to recover and regenerate after the fires, and to once again provide habitat for animals and birds as their populations recover.

Our forests are precious. We cannot afford to lock in the use of native forest wood for at least 10 years, with possible extensions after that.

Climate issues seem to have been ignored. I was heartened when the Bega Valley Shire declared a climate emergency, and developed a Climate Resilience Strategy, but approving this DA would fly in the face of these measures, and raise ethical and legal issues.

As the proposed DA would give Allied Natural Wood Exports a monopoly on purchase of every tree logged in the Eden region. It will only employ 20 people, while slashing direct jobs provided by other mills.

This is an industry that is already heavily subsidised by tax payers, so it is difficult to see any economic benefit to expanding the activities of the mill. The environmental consequences will be detrimental at a time when it is imperative that we act to protect it.

Please deny this DA and allow forests to regenerate, to sequester carbon, to provide habitat for wildlife. And please don't allow the production of briquettes from charred timber, as burning these will only further add to global warming.

None of us want further drought and catastrophic fires.

Barbara Robertson
129 Murrah St Bermagui 2546