

From:
Sent: Friday, 23 October 2009 3:11 PM
To: Avtar Singh
Subject: Redgum submission

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am an environmental scientist and keen bushwalker and birdwatcher and have visited the river redgum forest along the Murray River in the past. I have been following the progress of the recent events in relation to this beautiful forest and have been particularly pleased to see that Victoria is conserving significant areas in new National Parks.

It is with some disappointment that I have read the initial report from the NRC which purports to be a scientific assessment of the Redgum forests of southern NSW. This report is glaringly inadequate in that it doesn't address the impacts of logging on forest ecosystems and does not consider the overall biodiversity of these unique areas focussing instead on a narrow range of threatened species. In addition, the report does not take into consideration national reserve criteria that mandate 15 per cent of forest types should be represented in the reserve system, does not address how the legal requirements of the EPBC Act will be met and does not consider climate change policies, in particular, the CSIRO finding that large areas of habitat must be protected to conserve species on a rapidly warming planet.

The overall slant of the NRC document appears to be pro-logging and does not even investigate the well known and significant conservation benefits of a Redgum National Parks outcome, let alone the economic benefits that can accrue from national parks.

It is vital that the NRC, in it's next report, do a proper scientific assessment that addresses the failings of the initial report. I strongly urge you to protect these forest areas in National parks, to engage with traditional Aboriginal owners in jointly managed parks if they so wish, and to ensure that these areas are allocated sufficient environmental water flows to ensure the survival of these precious forests. Of course, any parks outcome should include provisions for industry restructure so that timber industry employees and businesses are fairly compensated for loss of wood supply.

Given the small number of jobs in the local timber industry I believe that these areas are of far greater value to the people of NSW as National Parks, where what's left of the mighty Redgums of Australian folklore and all the animals that dwell there can continue to exist. We should act quickly to follow in the footsteps of Victoria in their timely move to protect what is left of redgum in that state.

I hope that you take strong action to protect these forests, Yours Sincerely, Boudicca Cerese.
23/10/09