

From: Dr D L Robinson
Sent: Friday, 23 October 2009 12:31 PM
To: Avtar Singh
Subject: Submission on the River Red Gum Report

Submission on the River Red Gum Report

River Red Gum wetlands on the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers of south-western NSW are unique to the planet. The Barmah-Millewa and Koondrook-Perricoota forests are two of the largest contiguous Red Gum forests left in the world.

River Red Gum wetlands provide an irreplaceable refuge for plants and animals in one of the most heavily cultivated and poorly protected landscapes in Australia.

This region is known to provide habitat for at least 69 plants and animals threatened with extinction, including species such as the Barking Owl, Regent Parrot and Southern Bell Frog.

Vast tracts of Red Gum are already under stress and are dying as a result of changed water regimes, yet they are still being targeted for intensive logging, patch clear felling and grazing.

The destruction of these unique wetland forests is not delivering a good economic outcome.

A recent report by independent economic consultants shows that a much greater economic return would be derived from protecting the River Red Gum forests than is currently being derived by exploiting them. In fact, taxpayers are unknowingly paying to have these precious forests destroyed due to indirect subsidies from the NSW Government to the logging industry.

The majority of red gum that is logged (more than 80%) is used only for low value products such as firewood, fence posts and railway sleepers.

I therefore urge Natural Resources Commission to make sure these internationally significant areas finally take their rightful place as world class National Parks.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Dorothy L Robinson