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From: Angela Munro
Sent: Thursday, 20 August 2009 9:26 PM
To: Felicity Calvert
Subject: NSW River Red Gums

August 19 09

The Secretary

Forests Assessment

Natural Resources Commission

I am relieved to learn that the Natural Resources Commission is assessing River Red Gum forests in NSW.

I am very familiar with the Red Gum Forests and with the degradation to which they have been subjected with logging, grazing, silting up and loss of amazing birdlife such as broilgas. I wrote an ecotourism strategy for the area for a cross-border group of councils: *Superb Parrot: Superb Region in 1986*. I trust that the Natural Resources Commission can document the extreme threats facing the River Red Gum forests and recommend strong conservation action to counteract those threats.

I would like to support the VNPA in making the following comments on the terms of reference:

1. The environmental crisis facing River Red Gums is severe - it is already well past the eleventh hour. I believe that a decision needs to be implemented and **new National Parks created before the end of the year.**
2. I believe it is crucial that the precautionary principle is applied in full - given the paucity of detailed environmental surveys in the region. **It is important that proper precaution is applied on the side of environmental protection as is routinely done in Europe.** Even cross-border mapping was non-existent when I prepared the Central Murray Ecotourism Plan.
3. I seek the **inclusion in the terms of reference of water management and the impacts of climate change on future water availability.**
4. I believe that the **identification of large new National Parks should be specified in the terms of reference as a key outcome from the assessment.**
5. I support the **inclusion of EPBC matters in the assessment** but believe that **interim protections should be imposed to protect Ramsar wetlands from illegal patch-clearfelling while the assessment takes place.**
6. **How the requirements of the EPBC Act will be met needs to be made explicit** and specifically what process under that Act will be applied and how the approval process will proceed.
7. The Terms of Reference need to provide for stronger and more specific involvement of Indigenous people and consultation with Indigenous communities. The TOR should require close investigation of Aboriginal Ownership of conservation reserves wherever sought by Traditional Owners.

16/09/2009

Yours sincerely

Angela Munro