

Subject: Forests Assessments Consultation

To the Forests Assessment Natural Resources Commission,

I am interested in making some recommendations to the commission regarding red gum forestry in NSW.

I would argue that the TOR must provide stronger and more specific involvement of Traditional Owners. Presently the language is too general and not specific enough. The TOR should require that Aboriginal Ownership of conservation reserves be considered wherever sought by Traditional Owners. I also believe it is crucial that the precautionary principle is applied in full. There is a lack of detailed environmental surveys in the region, we should err on the side of caution and protect habitat rather than clearfell log it then wait and see if threatened species survive.

Thirdly, there is no reserve system to protect river red gum forests despite the National Forest Policy Statement mandating that at least 15% (of the pre-European extent) of each Australian forest type be protected in permanent reserves.

Identification of large new National Parks should therefore be specified in the terms of reference as a key outcome from the assessment. Fourth, getting adequate water to those areas is essential for the red gum forest survival. Flooding the red gum forests is absolutely essential to their long term survival. The gains of a securing national forest will be nought if the trees die due to dehydration.

Finally, the continued logging of red gum forests whilst the assessment is being conducted is illegal. Logging in NSW red gum forests is currently illegal under both the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)*. Illegal logging must halt immediately. We must not tolerate these practices in our own country, just as we endeavour to prevent them in developing and other nations.

Thankyou for considering my contribution.

Sincere regards,
Piers Michael Gooding