



A joint letter from 13 environmental NGOs active in south eastern Australia, co-ordinated by the South East Region Conservation Alliance, PO Box 724, Narooma NSW 2546 Australia <http://www.serca-online.org/>

Mr Yoshio Haga, President,
Nippon Paper Group, Inc.
1-2-2 Hitotsubashi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0003
Japan

Dear Mr Haga

We are writing to request that your company refuse to buy woodchips from forests in south eastern New South Wales which are habitat for the koala.

The NSW Government agency which manages native forest logging, Forests NSW has announced that it intends to commence logging of Mumbulla and Murrah State Forests in March. These forests are the last stronghold of koalas in the region.

Public opinion is strongly against this logging as it poses a direct threat to the last koalas in the region. We understand that this logging is to proceed against expert scientific advice that the remnant koala population in that forest needs to be protected.

In the normal course of events, a substantial proportion of the logs taken from this and other forests in the Eden region will go to the South East Fibre Exports (SEFE) woodchip mill at Eden.

We are asking you to advise SEFE that your company is not prepared to buy chips which are sourced from koala habitat forest in the region. Known koala habitat forests include: Mumbulla, Murrah, Bermagui, Tanja, Yurammie and Tantawangalo, all of which are scheduled to be logged this year.

While this logging of koala habitat is occurring, SEFE cannot guarantee that its production of its woodchips has not harmed koalas and we request that your company does not buy any woodchips from SEFE.

There is serious concern in Australia that koala populations are declining and against this background, the logging of forests where they have been identified in recent times is highly controversial and has attracted significant media attention in regional and metropolitan media. An article has been published in the major Sydney newspaper, the Sydney Morning Herald, <http://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/logging-plan-poses-threat-to-precious-koala-colony-20100124-msm7.html>

A NSW Government sponsored survey last year, conducted across all land tenures found a small, active population of about 10-50 koalas.

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Disease and loss of habitat have contributed to a dramatic decline in koala numbers over recent decades, with the species now close to being declared endangered.

The koala population in south east NSW was once abundant, but now there are grave concerns for the future of the species.

The koala is a very popular animal both in Japan and Australia and we are sure that you would not want your company to be associated with logging that led to their disappearance from an entire region. Ultimately, the only way for Japanese companies to gain trust with their customers of paper products is to adopt a policy of no further import of native forest woodchips

Given that this is the global year of biodiversity with the COP10 conference to be held in Japan later this year, it may be advantageous for any corporation to ensure that their activities are not directly threatening endangered species, especially one as iconic as the Koala.

We would be happy to provide further information on this matter should you require it.

Yours sincerely

Keith Hughes

Convener, South East Region Conservation Alliance

On behalf of: South East Region Conservation Alliance, Humane Society International, Gulaga (Mt Dromedary) Protection Group, Friends of the Earth, Melbourne, Bega Environment Network, Chipstop campaign, Friends of Durras, Environment East Gippsland, The Wilderness Society, Canopy Native Forest Committee, Total Environment Centre NSW, Forestmedia, National Parks Association South East branch, Friends of Five Forests

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