

Senate Committee – Environment and Communications Committee: Inquiry into the Status, Health and Sustainability of Australia's Koala Population.

Submission from Friends of the Earth Melbourne. Prepared by Anthony Amis – Land Use Researcher.

Anthony Amis
Friends of the Earth Melbourne
PO Box 222, Fitzroy, 3065.

Dear Committee,

I would like to submit a short submission concerning this important inquiry. For the past 15 years I have been involved in campaigning to protect the Strzelecki Ranges, in the South Gippsland region of Victoria. I have compiled some information from documents I have completed over the years regarding the lack of protection for the Strzelecki Koala, perhaps the most important koala population in Australia. It is a sad story, as vested interests have conspired to undermine the most important factor in the Koala's survival, their habitat.

I would also like to state that Friends of the Earth supports the work of Friends of the Gippsland Bush (FoGB) and would support the recommendations of that group in their submission to the Senate Committee regarding the significance of the Strzelecki Koala. Rather than submitting an indential paper to that of FoGB, FoE's submission should be seen as being complementary to that of FoGB's with additional maps and photos that may not have been submitted by FoGB.

So short sighted and blinkered has been the Victorian Government's position on the Strzelecki Koala, that they effectively corporatised/privatised most of the remaining habitat of the Strzelecki Koala in 1993 through the Victorian Plantations Corporation Act, later granting Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP), a perpetual lease to the VPC lands for 99 years. The Strzeleckis are one of Victoria's most depleted bioregions, with less than 2% in official reserves. To add insult to injury the Victorian Government claim that Koalas in Victoria are not threatened because of the 'success' of its translocation program. This claim however does not take into account the unique attributes of the Strzelecki Koala, whose habitat is being destroyed on a daily basis.

In 2001, HVP gained access to most of the northern slopes of the Strzelecki Ranges with the purchase of Australian Paper Plantations. This purchase effectively granted HVP a monopoly position of land ownership in the Strzeleckis. Since 1998, HVP have clearfelled approximately 8400ha of Koala habitat, mostly Mountain Ash (*E.regnans*) reforestation, but also native forest under the guise of plantation logging. Approximately 75% of the *E.regnans* clearfelled by HVP during this time has made its way to the Maryvale Paper Mill, Australia's largest paper and pulp mill facility. HVP has replanted its logged *E.regnans* with *E.nitens* (Shining Gum) which is not endemic to the Strzelecki Ranges and is not a Koala feed tree.

HVP of course claim that they do not log native forest. However who is monitoring the company's operations to check the validity of these claims? Through years of monitoring it is apparent to me that many thousands of koala habitat trees have been destroyed by HVP, either through the reclassification of them as plantation ingrowth, or by removing those growing on the boundaries of

logging areas, creek gullies or those growing on Crown roadside reserves thereby expanding the plantation base of the company.

It has also been disturbing to note the complicit nature of groups/individuals working with HVP over this time for the supposed protection of the Strzelecki Koala. These groups/individuals have failed to acknowledge the higher elevation habitat, most notably E.regnans that the koala utilises and which HVP have concentrated their clearfelling. It appears that this has been a deliberate oversight with the significance of E.regnans underplayed or even ignored by these groups/individuals.

It is crucial that the Strzelecki Koala be recognised as being threatened across the Strzelecki Biogeographical Range. Friends of the Earth echoes the concerns of Friends of Gippsland Bush in that the Strzelecki Koala requires urgent protection and nomination as being threatened across the Strzelecki bioregion. It is probably beyond the ability of our environment groups to pull together the best science in Australia to save this animal. It would probably require several hundred thousand dollars and a dedicated team to properly understand what is happening on the ground with this animal.

Background.

In 2005, I produced two webpages on the Strzelecki Koala, detailing some of its unique history and also detailing its known range and where sightings had been compiled. The website can be found at these locations: <http://www.hancockwatch.nfshost.com/docs/koala2005.htm> and <http://www.hancockwatch.nfshost.com/docs/koala2005a.htm>

There is also an earlier web page which draws together information from the year 2000. http://www.hancockwatch.nfshost.com/docs/koala.htm#content_top

The Age newspaper has also published stories on the Strzelecki Koala. One such article can be viewed at this link.

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/disease-leaves-koala-pouches-empty/2005/12/10/1134086848158.html>

The prime concerns summarised in the 2005 report are still valid today.

“Problem/Concern by Susie Zent (Friends of Gippsland Bush).

Very little is known about the Strzelecki Koala population. What is known however, is that it is one of the few (if not the only) truly endemic Victorian koala populations, with its gene pool currently uncompromised by the long-standing translocation program of the Victorian government. Because of this, the population is of considerable conservation importance, not just because of its uniqueness, but also because of its potential to assist longer term conservation and management efforts of Victorian koalas generally. In order to ensure that management of the Strzelecki Koalas is placed on a sustainable footing, research is needed into the following issues:

Priority 1: Preferred feed species - a peer reviewed methodology now exists (Phillips et al 2000; Phillips and Callaghan, 2000; Phillips 2000) by which food tree preferences can be quantified, thus allowing both planning and conservation decisions and/or actions to be implemented with greater confidence.

The Australia Koala Foundation (AKF) have undertaken some mapping work, but we have not seen the brief or the results. If management prescriptions are to be based on these recommendations then they need to be independently reviewed.

Priority 2: Location of breeding population(s) - a methodology has recently been developed (Phillips, pers. comm) that allows the boundaries of areas being utilised by breeding koala populations (as opposed to areas being utilised by transient koalas) to be accurately modelled and delineated for conservation and management purposes. Breeding patterns of Koalas are generally well understood and documented in the literature.

This is work that needs urgent priority. Again experienced people have offered to undertake the work and act as advisors to this project.

Priority 3: Assessing the impact of the fragmented nature of remaining habitat in the Strzelecki Ranges on the areas' Koala population is a long term project (10-20 years), as are the impacts of forest management practices.

Priority 4: Listing of the Strzelecki Koala under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act. This would be a unique project in that no population of a particular species has been listed in the FFG due to their uncompromised genetics and rare alleles. Listing the Koala would have large impacts especially in areas of State Forest that come under management of the Crown and are threatened

by logging for firewood and pre-scribed burns.”

In February 2009 I posted the following information on the website FSC Watch which gives an interesting background into Hancock's lack of protection for this animal. The full article can be viewed at: http://www.fsc-watch.org/archives/2009/02/23/FSC_Hancock_and_Sma

FSC refers to Forest Stewardship Council, supposedly the world's 'greenest' timber certification scheme. Hancock Victorian Plantations have been certified under the FSC scheme since February 2004. Our experience is that FSC in Gippsland has failed dismally in protecting key koala habitat, with FSC certifier Smartwood complicit with Hancock in turning a blind eye to the protection of the koala. So much for FSC's green environmental claims.

Of relevance to this committee is the following edited version of what was posted by me on FSC Watch:

“Strzelecki Koalas

The Strzelecki Koala, the only 'genetically diverse' koala population remaining in Victoria and South Australia, faces an equally uncertain future with Smartwood now claiming that Hancock are under no obligation to protect the species.

Under the heading Koala Bear Management, the 2008 Smartwood audit states;

"However, in Victoria the Koala is not offered additional protection as a species let alone as distinct populations. As such HVP or any other forest manager for that matter is not required to establish specific management plans for the species ... If the Koala population requires conserving then it is the State Government's responsibility to list the species accordingly and this has not yet occurred. As such there is no specific reason why HVP as a private land manager should be required to establish conservation measures for a species such as the Koala as long as it is not required by the state or federal Government."

The Koala is considered to be nationally significant, therefore it is reasonable to expect conservation measures for this species on **all land tenures**. The Strzelecki Koala is the only endemic Koala population remaining in Victoria and it IS recognised as a distinct Management Unit.



Strzelecki Koala facing an uncertain future, with Smartwood, FSC and Hancock Victorian Plantations now washing their hands of any strategies to protect this species.

According to the Koala Management Strategy the land manager is required to protect this species. How can any land manager do this without a Management Plan?

On January 22, 2007 Owen Trumper Manager Grand Ridge Plantations (a Hancock Subsidiary) stated: *"We do not have a Specific BMP for Koalas. Grand Ridge Plantations is currently working with the Australian Koala Foundation on a Koala Management Plan. This project is awaiting the completion of the current EVC mapping project in the Strzelecki ranges."*

The 2008 audit statement by Smartwood is actually a major step backwards from the situation that occurred before the FSC certification. Realising the sensitivity of the koala issue, Hancock very early wanted to show that it was working to conserve the species. On 2 October 2000 Hancock and the Australia Koala Foundation (AKF) announced a joint MoU to learn more about koalas on Hancock land.

The press release stated:

"The scientific community regards the Strzelecki koala population as making an important contribution to the national koala gene pool" Mr (Kevin) White (CEO Hancock) said. *"This MOU along with the field studies, will hopefully lead to a situation where critical koala habitat on HVP's holdings will be permanently protected."*

(Deborah) Tabart (from the Australia Koala Foundation) said *"This MOU and the final Koala Habitat Atlas that will be produced could lead the way to sustainable logging by all companies in the Strzelecki Ranges. The koalas in this region are critical to the future of Victorian koalas and we are delighted that HVP understands their scientific importance."*

Almost one decade later neither the Atlas or the Koala Best Management Practice are anywhere to be seen, with rumours suggesting that Hancock have refused to hand over Strzelecki information that can be properly used by the Australia Koala Foundation. Strange given that Hancock has extensively studied their land holdings for the past decade and have a database second to none. Meanwhile Hancock have logged almost 6000ha of Mountain Ash/Koala habitat (which are koala feed trees) and converted these trees to Shining Gum Plantations a non-koala feed tree. (Approximately 3500ha of koala habitat has been converted since FSC certification by Hancock in February 2004.)

In its initial audit in 2004/5, Smartwood wrote "Further work is also being carried out by the Australia Koala Foundation to detail koala habitat in the Strzelecki Ranges and a draft Koala Habitat Atlas is expected soon" (page 58).

Four years later we have seen nothing produced neither by the company or the Australia Koala Foundation. It would appear that Smartwood too has now washed its hands of any responsibility in protecting this species. This should be an international disgrace. How can FSC allow Smartwood to get away with this?

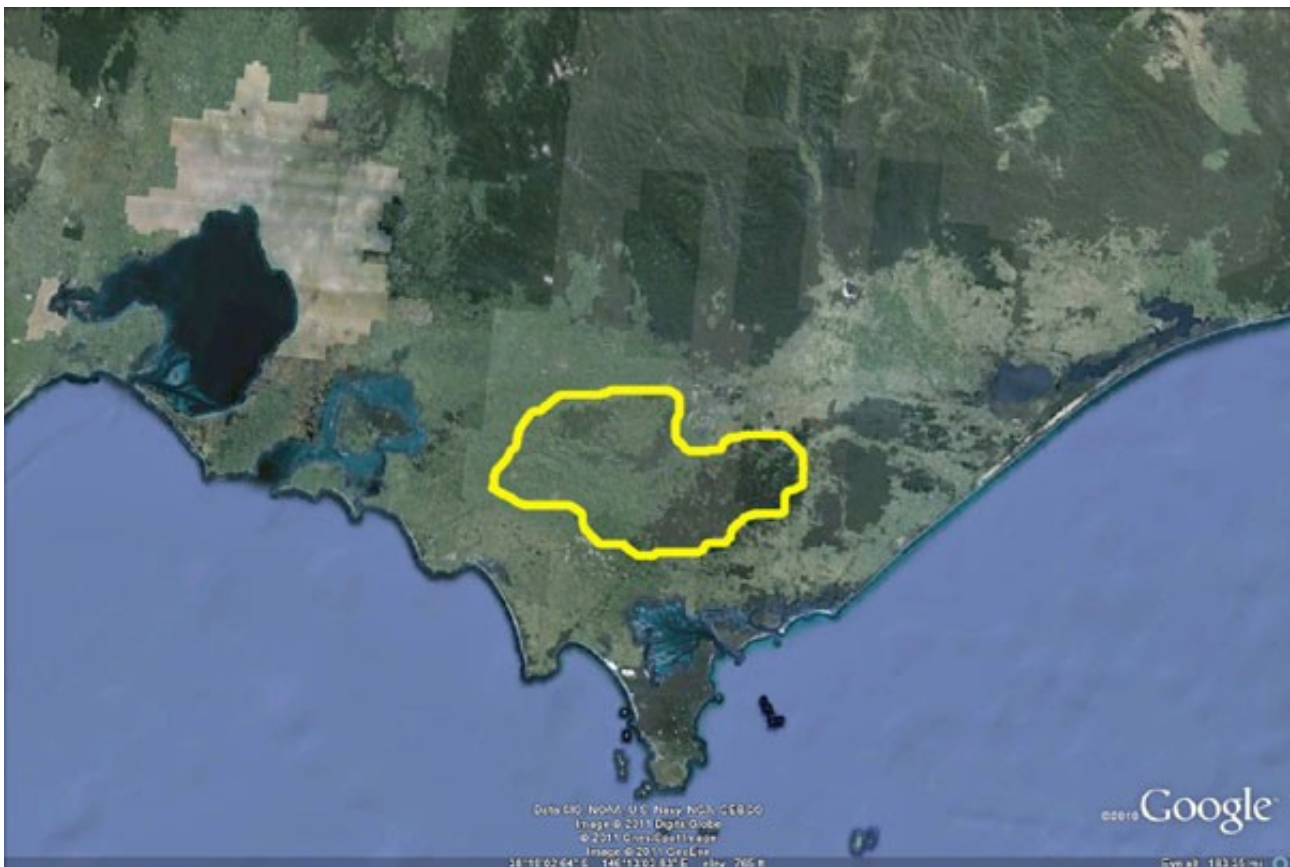
The Koala in Victoria was almost wiped out by the 1930s. The only remnant population to survive the onslaught of white hunters and disease was a small population in the Strzelecki Ranges/South Gippsland. All other koala populations in Victoria and South Australia are descendents from a few individuals transferred to Phillip Island and French Island in the late 1880s. A study by [Friends of the Earth in 2005](#) found that approximately 54% of sightings of Strzelecki Koalas since 1990 occurred on land now managed by Hancock. Clearly, the way Hancock manages its land holdings is the single most important factor in the long term protection of the species.

An investigation carried out by Dr Bronwyn Houlden, School of Biological Science, University of New South Wales, 20th March 1997 and 6th April 1998 confirmed that the genetic pool of South Gippsland koalas has not been compromised. Dr Houlden indicated that on a national basis koalas generally are not considered to be threatened. She advised that this assessment has unfortunately led to an extremely simplistic view of conservation of biodiversity in the species. Her report was entitled *"Low genetic variability of the koala Phascolarctos cinereus in south-eastern Australia*

following a severe population bottleneck" - Published in Molecular Ecology 1996, 5 269-281.

Through extensive analysis by herself and her collaborators Houlden revealed that the species is composed of highly differentiated populations with low levels of gene flow between populations throughout their range. The Strzelecki Koala population constitutes a separate management unit and is significant in terms of management of biodiversity on a regional and state basis. Dr Houlden found that the Strzelecki Ranges had the highest level of genetic variation, of any Victorian population she analysed. This is important, given the low levels of genetic variability found in many populations in Victoria, which have been involved in the translocation program.

The Strzelecki koala population has high levels of genetic variability which have been detected by rare and unique genetic markers. These animals are statistically significantly differentiated from other Australian populations and therefore constitute a separate management unit. Because biodiversity in the species as a whole is dependent of conservation of populations throughout the species range, the Strzelecki Ranges population, together with the South Gippsland population is nationally significant as well. The lack of genetic diversity amongst Australian koalas could be critical to the survival of the species as a whole.

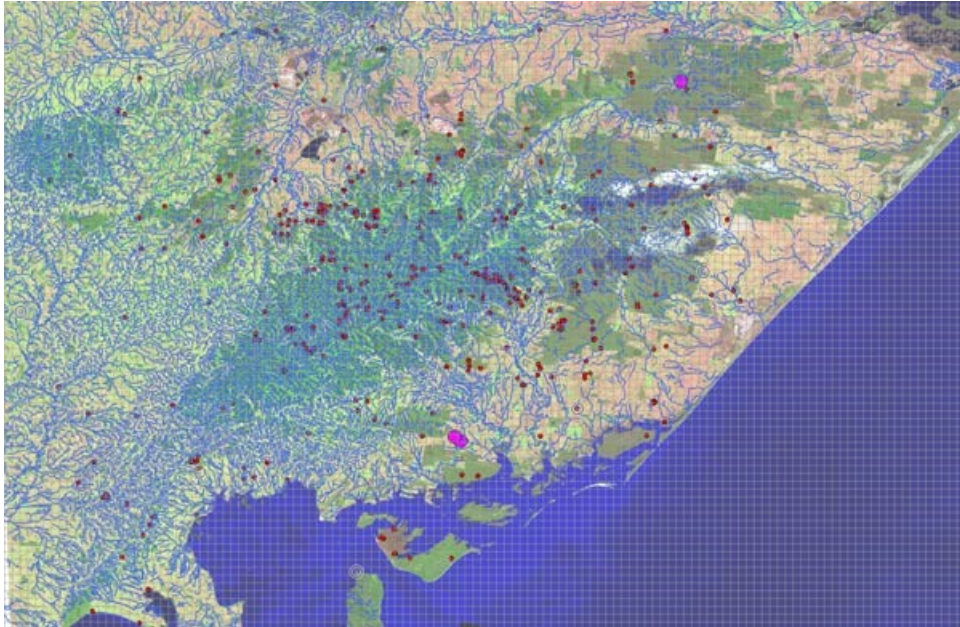


Google Earth Image showing approximate location boundary for the Strzelecki Ranges. Note that almost all of the west Strzelecki Region have already been cleared, with almost all of vegetation shown within yellow boundary line controlled by Hancock Victorian Plantations in perpetuity.

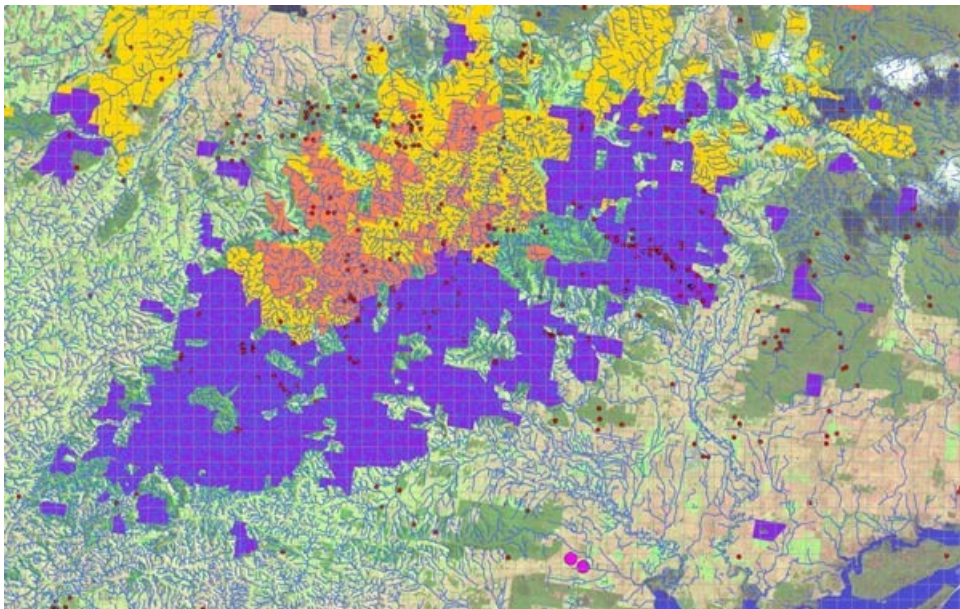
I also urge Committee Members to view this recently posted film on youtube which also explores land use and the politics of our concerns in the Strzeleckis. Photocopy paper, made by Australian paper is the major user of Strzelecki Hardwood.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_P28Jloxec

Maps sourced from 2005 Koala study.

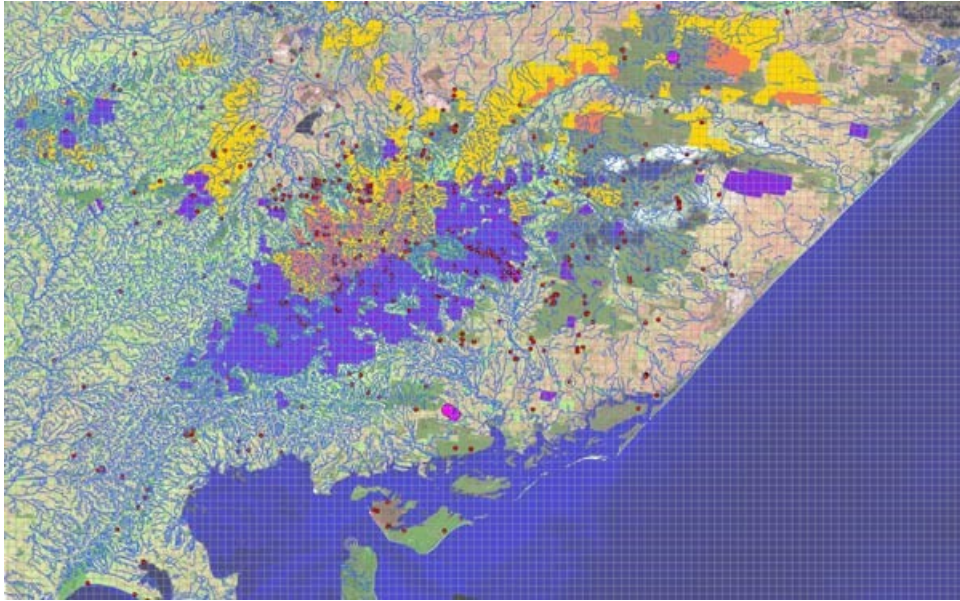


Strzelecki Ranges, with Koala sitings (1990-2005) marked in red. Translocation sites marked in pink (larger) dots. This shows that the Strzelecki population has been unlikely to have been significantly impacted by translocated populations.

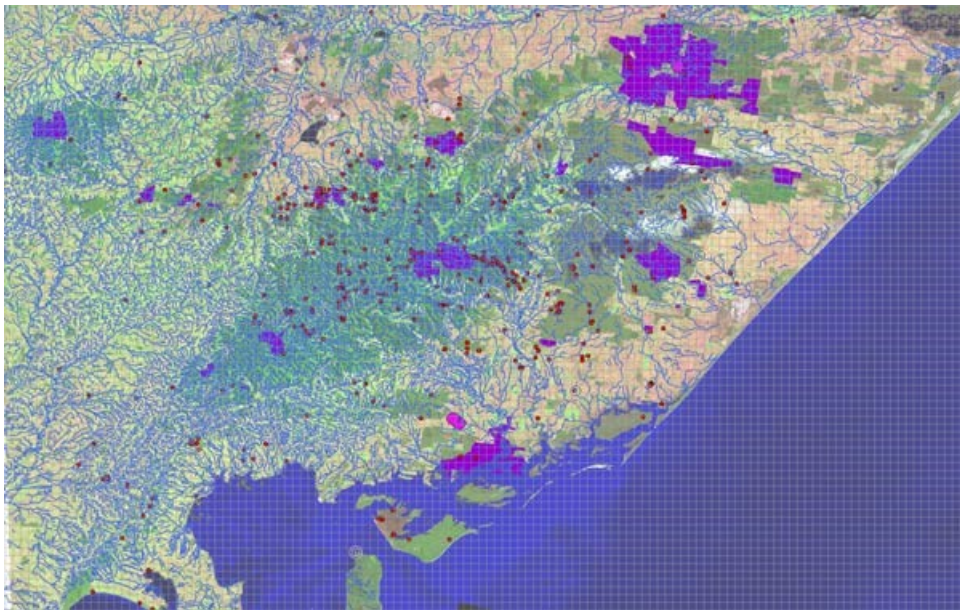


Land Tenure Strzelecki Ranges: Purple is land covered by Victorian Plantations Corporation Act 1993, Pink is ex APP leasehold, Gold is ex APP freehold. (APP = Australian Paper Plantations).

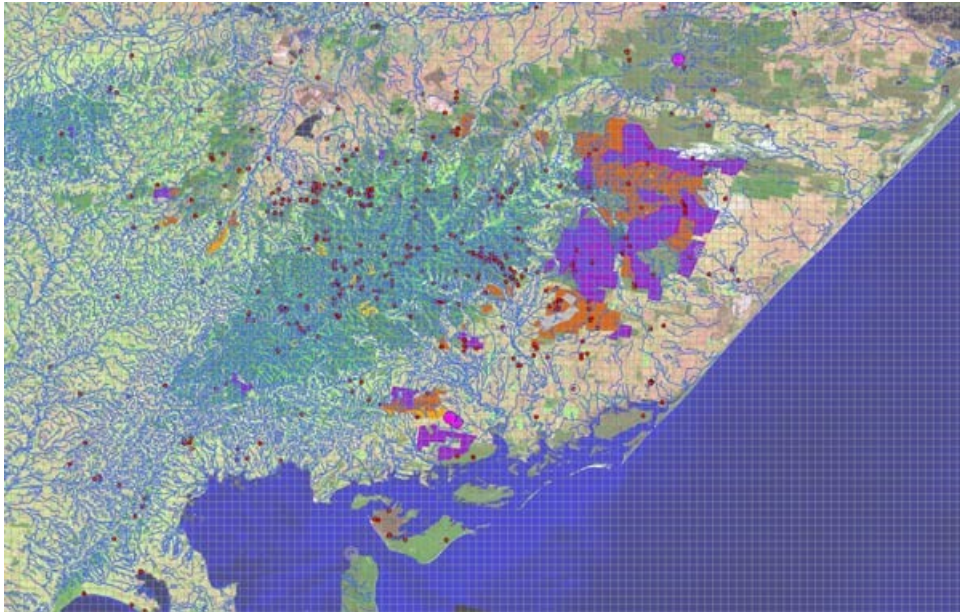
All highlighted land now under control of Hancock Victorian Plantations.



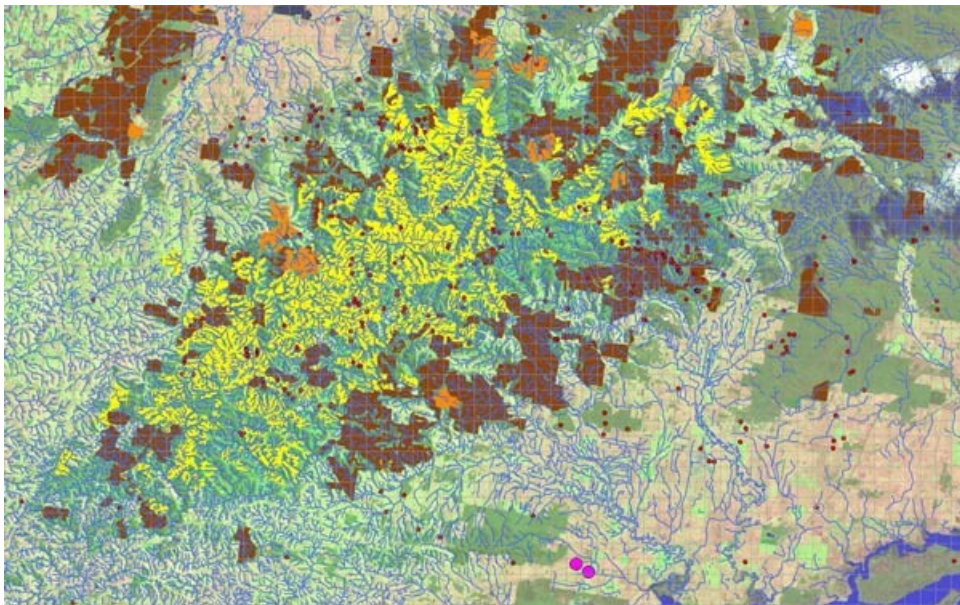
Wider View of Strzelecki/Hancock land tenure, which takes in Mt Worth/Allambee region to the west of Longford region to the east.



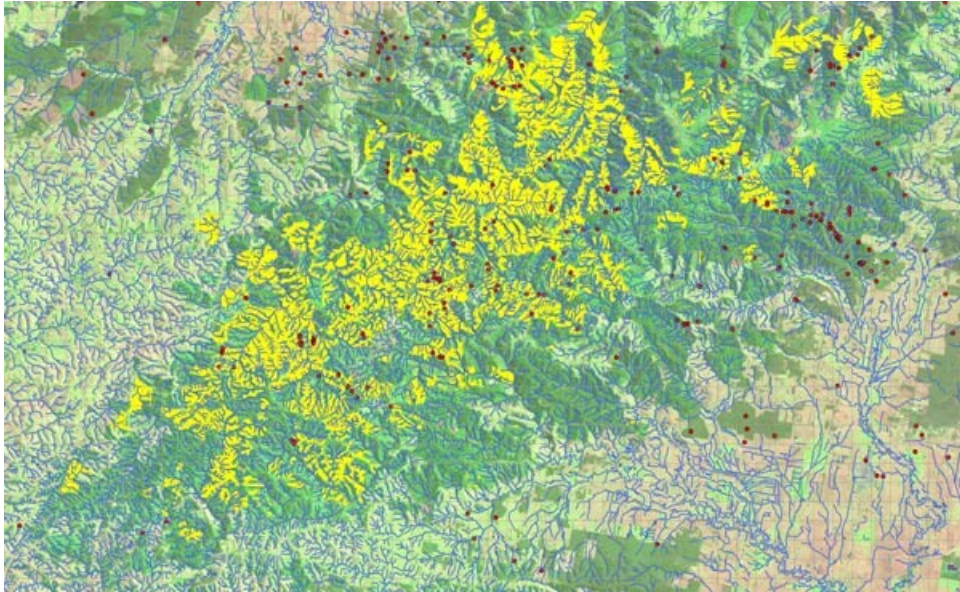
Strzelecki Reserves and southern Gippsland reserves marked in purple. As can be seen in this image, there are scant conservation reserves in the Strzeleckis, with many koala sitings at or near Morwell National Park or Tarra Bulga National Park.



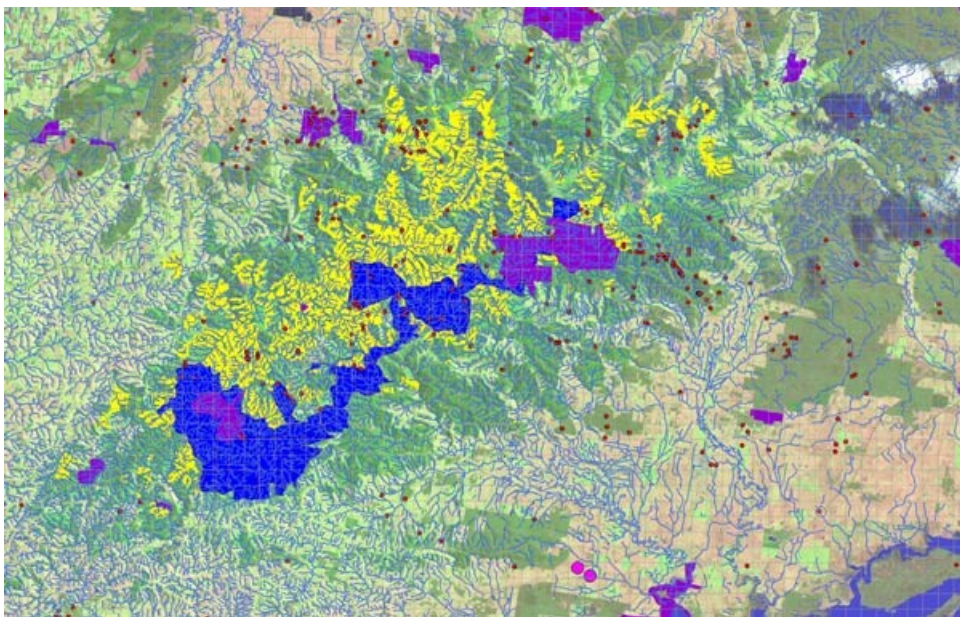
Shadings represent Public land in the Strzelecki Bioregion. Most of the public land is located to the east of the Strzeleckis and includes Wonwron State Forest which is logged for firewood. Very little public land remains in the Strzelecki's itself.



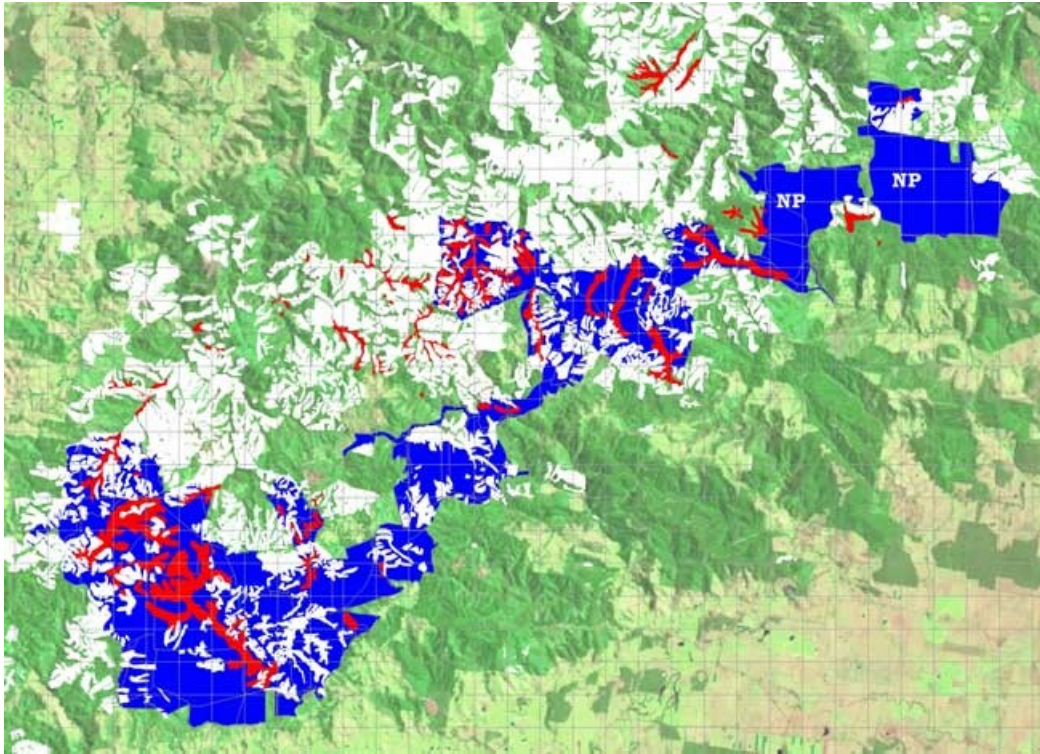
Strzelecki Ranges 2005: Yellow= *E.regnans*, Brown=*Pinus Radiata*, Orange=*E.nitens*. An updated map would see wider areas of orange at the expense of mainly the yellow, because Hancock have been replanting their *E. regnans* sites with *E.nitens*, as well as their higher elevation pine plantations.



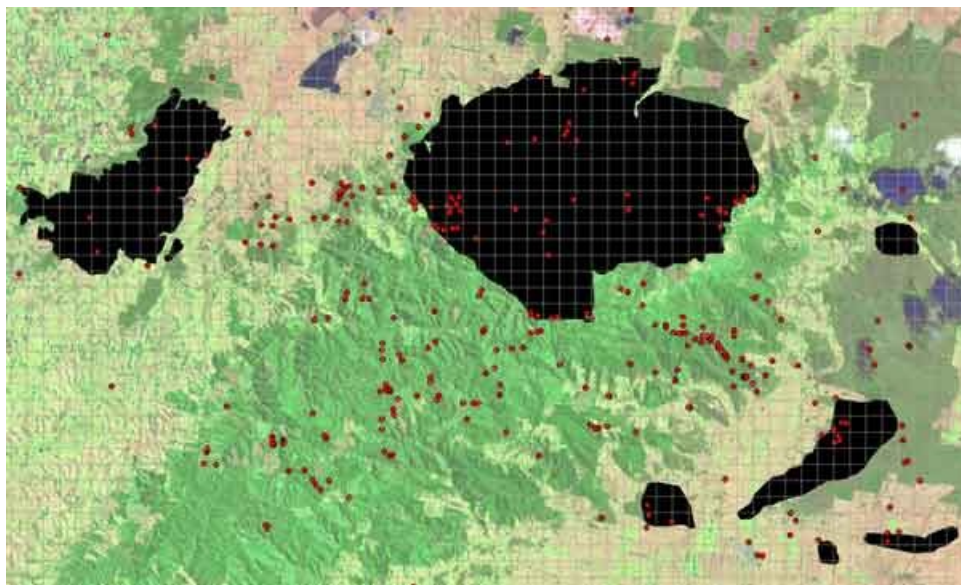
1990-2005: Koalas sitings in proximity to E.regnans (Mountain Ash)



Strzelecki Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve = Blue, Existing Reserves = Purple. This reserve was to be created in order to establish a viable habitat refuge for the Strzelecki Ranges. It's primary focus was to be protection of Strzelecki Cool Temperate Rainforest.



Planned logging inside the Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve (white). Rainforest marked in red. The original cores and links deal was renegotiated without community involvement by ex Conservation Minister Gavan Jennings and HVP CEO Linda Sewell.



January and early February 2009 bushfires and relation to known koala sitings 1990-2005. Large populations in the Jeeralangs would have been completely destroyed.

Habitat Destruction

The following pages show snippets of information that has been collated over the years on the Hancock Watch website. <http://www.hancockwatch.nfshost.com/>

Access to historical information since 1996 can be viewed here:
<http:// HancockWatch.nfshost.com/docs/LoggingIndex.htm>

The object of this exercise is to present to the committee examples of native vegetation (other than reforestation) that HVP has been responsible for logging. This is only a small selection of images from the website and the photos reveal that this clearance of koala habitat has continued unabated since the 1990s. Native vegetation has no protection under the Victorian Plantations Corporation Act.



21/3/99: Photo taken from Hatchery Road past Rhondas track. All old Regenerating Trees (buffers) removed from most of this road.



Rodgers Road: August 1999. Remnant old growth forest-non plantation timber removed. Trees bulldozed into gullies. Removal of non-plantation timber including blackwoods.



Albert River Catchment Yarram/Madayla Road. 22nd August 1999. Section 5 filter strips removed with debris pushed into gully floor.



Hemphill Way. May 21st, 2000. Removal and destruction of native vegetation, destruction of filter strips.



Hemphill Way May 2000. Prime Koala Habitat removed. Trees were felled around a Koala seeking refuge in a large tree during a field trip with Hancock personnel.



Jumbuk Road 2001: Destruction of Native Vegetation.



Glenaldale Forest Block - May 2002: Hancock/Grand Ridge Plantation's continue selling allotments of land that were supposed to be protected under the 8 point agreement agreed to between Australian Paper Plantations and Friends of Gippsland Bush in March 1997. Another agreement not held by the company.



Male Strzelecki Koala



Feb 2002: Destruction of Native Vegetation near Ryton Junction.



July 2002: Jeeralang West, Destruction of Blue Gums. Prime Koala Habitat.



July 2002: Mutual Track. Hardwood reforestation logged. This is a typical scene in the Strzelecki Ranges.



October 2002: Jeeralang West Road. Prime Koala habitat destroyed.



October 2002: Jumbuk Road. Logging of Roadside easements/Crown Land. On an ongoing problem in the Strzelecki Ranges has been the continued clearfelling of these potential wildlife corridors, all of use to animals such as koalas.



December 2003: Albert River Catchment - Southern Strzeleckis. This area was logged a couple of years ago. It was 'apparently' a Mountain Ash 'plantation'. This site has been replanted with Shining Gum, a species not endemic to the Strzelecki Ranges (tree with bluer leaves). This location also sees a proliferation of understorey species and some indigenous eucalypt species emerging with the Shining Gum.



January 2004- Strzelecki Ranges: This photo reveals Messmate stumps and Mountain Ash stumps. Paling Track and Kels Track south west of Carrajung in the Wellington Shire.



March 04: Northern Strzelecki Ranges (Middle Creek Catchment - Land leased from the Crown since 1961 - Parish of Jumbuk) - just south of Jumbuk Road. Plantation Expansion by Stealth: Hancock style. This is an example of regenerating *Eucalypts globulus* Southern Blue Gum - subspecies *globulus*. Restricted on the mainland to South Gippsland and Otways). This area had recently been logged and burnt by Hancock. This site has not yet been replanted by Hancock, meaning that natural regeneration of bluegum was occurring. It also means that at this location bluegums had recently been logged, apparently under the guise of plantation logging. These bluegums were re-establishing themselves at least 50 metres up from the retained Hancock buffer zone - meaning that this area (where the bluegums are reestablishing) should be retained as native forest - not plantation.



April 2004: Jeeralang inside pine plantation, 70 native trees logged.



May 2004: Log dump consisting mainly of indigenous vegetation in ex state run pine plantation [LEGL93-123](#). Dump located at the top of a tributary of Traralgon Creek.



January 2005 Strzelecki Ranges. Parish of Bulga Allotment 13 - Leasehold under 1961 APM Wood Pulp Agreement. Tarra River Catchment. Yarram water supply. It appears that over one dozen trees ranging from 60 to 90 years have been logged in this plantation. The public is under the illusion that Hancock only logs their plantations. If that is the case why were these trees removed?



December 2005: Track punched through Hancock 'custodial land'/native forest.



September 2006: Removal of native vegetation off Franklin Track in the Franklin River catchment.



October 2006: Strzelecki Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve announced by Victorian Conservation Minister John Thwaites. This deal 'fell through' and was replaced with another, after HVP claimed they had contractual obligations that had to be met.



October 13 2006: Cores and Links Announcement, with company, government reps and conservationists. Victorian Environment Minister John Thwaites, 2nd from right. Conservationists tried to get an outcome that would work best. But pulp mill politics proved too difficult...



November 2006: Snakeback Track, was once full of Koalas, not any more as these trees have been logged.

Key sticking point

- Community and company agree that a total volume approach is warranted
- Disagree on what this should be
- Company has previously indicated to community shortfall is 600,000 m³ and provided documentation
- Revised figure from HVP is 835,000 m³ – HVP to advise reason for difference
 - Prelim advice is that difference is from:
 - not downgrading sawlog to pulpwood
 - build in of annual commitment to AP (for ongoing relationship)
- Community refuses to accept 835,000. Agrees to downgrade of sawlogs and does not accept the need to build ongoing relationship with AP as a risk / responsibility for the cores and links
- Flowing from this is shortfall audit terms of reference / process to monitor volumes achieved



DSE document April 30 2007 showing shortfall increased after the HoA was signed in October 2006. This was the key factor behind the deal falling through. No explanation was never explained to why HVP significantly increased their shortfall.



December 2006: More native vegetation removal. Morwell River East Branch, Allotment 55 Parish of Wonyip.



February 2007: Callignee Estate Road. Roadside buffer at this location has been logged. This stump was measured to be 9 metres from the centre of the road. The crown owns many roadside buffers in the Strzeleckis and removal of such trees in the past by Hancock has created the company some headaches in recent times.



March 2007 - Strzelecki Ranges - Mirboo Plantations - Elizabeth Creek Catchment/Tarwin River catchment - Loop Road. This photo reveals that older trees, possibly 60 years plus+ have been logged at this site.



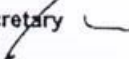
October 2007: Strzelecki Ranges - Traralgon Creek Catchment - Parish of Callignee. Pines weren't the only trees cut down at this site. Bluegums have also been removed. Were permits granted by Latrobe Shire for the removal of native vegetation by Hancock?



December 2007: Deadlock Creek Catchment, more old trees destroyed by HVP.



Department of Sustainability and Environment

TO: Secretary  Ref: SEC003805
SEC003805R
FROM: Natural Resources File:
SUBJECT: Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards

RECOMMENDATION/S

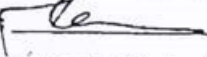
1. That you sign the attached reply to Ms Linda Sewell, Chief Executive Officer, Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP).

KEY ISSUES

2. The changes made to HVP's Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards conform to the requirements of the *Code of Practice for Timber Production 2007* (the Code) and the draft Action Statement for Rainforest under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, as they relate to private native forest.
3. HVP is under increasing pressure from conservation groups to adopt the rainforest protection prescriptions that apply to public land, for the management of HVP land in the Strzelecki Ranges, South Gippsland. This goes beyond the requirements of the Code and the draft Action Statement, and risks establishing a precedent with potential impacts on other private landholders.
4. The attached reply endorses the Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards and reaffirms DSE's position that environmental standards for the management of private native forest do not necessarily need to align with those for public native forest.
5. The reply also notes that HVP may need to review its Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards once the Action Statement for Rainforest is finalised and approved. DSE could assist with this further review at the appropriate time.

CONTEXT

6. DSE endorsed HVP's Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards on 20 October 2006, following a long period of consultation associated with the revision of the Code and the development of the draft Action Statement for Rainforest.
7. In February 2007, HVP was audited for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. HVP has stated that as a result of the audit, it was required to increase rainforest buffer widths to align the approach to rainforest protection adopted for public native forest.
8. The revision of HVP's Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards was undertaken in consultation with DSE staff. The Company is now seeking your endorsement of the revised Rainforest Management Policy, Procedure and Operating Standards.

Approved by:  Date: 29/10/17
Janine Haddon, Executive Director Natural Resources ☎ 9637 8014

Reviewed by: Kylie White, Director Forest Resources ☎ 9637 8416

Processed by: s25: irrelevant Project Manager Actions for Biodiversity Conservation s25: irrelevant

SEC003805

Page 1

Admission from DSE that environmental standards for the management of private native forest do not necessarily need to align with those for public native forest. Why not? What does that mean for Koalas?



January 2008: Grey Gum Track. Sawlogs off to local sawmills.



February 2008: Morwell River Catchment Strzelecki Ranges, Grey Gum Track. Non - plantation tree logged. Don't believe Hancock's PR. They do log custodial land (native forest) whenever they can get away with it.



Strzelecki Ranges February 2008. Childers 'Plantation'/Elizabeth Creek catchment. A couple of hectares of 1957 mountain ash was logged at this site in 2006. Inside this forest of predominately 50 year trees, were also old growth trees possibly over 100 years old. This particular example measured 6.1 metres (20 feet) girth at the base. The site has now been reestablished with shining gum, a non endemic species to the Strzeleckis. This is a clear case of Hancock lopping old growth and thereby converting native forests into plantations.



February 2008: Traralgon Creek catchment. Lopping of old growth Bluegums by Hancock. These trees were used by Hancock contractors to attach logging cables to for cable logging.



May 2008 Strzelecki Ranges/Jack River catchment: Debois Track inside Strzelecki Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve. *Eucalyptus Viminalis* being logged at this site.



May 2008 Strzelecki Ranges/Jack River catchment: Jack Road inside Strzelecki Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve. This tree was logged for no apparent purpose and left on the forest reserve floor. Why?



June 29 2008: Locals and Conservationists taking a stand. Government and Company couldn't care less.



Strzelecki Ranges June 2008: Habitat tree on Asplenslip Road. This tree 'blew' over due to much of its base being dug out to widen logging road. Prime koala habitat.



Strzelecki Ranges June 2008: Koala claw marks on dead tree, another victim of Hancock's activities in the Strzeleckis on Asplenslip Road.



Strzelecki Ranges: Morwell River Catchment. Craig Crt. removal of stand of mixed forest prime Koala feed trees - Grey Gum Manna Gum and Messmate in the Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve. Trees are resprouting so easily identified.



October 2008: Strzelecki Ranges Jack River. Dubios Track. Stands of Mt Ash & Viminalis logged at this site.



December 2008 Strzelecki Ranges: Jeffrey Creek Catchment. Old growth stags, crucial for habitat values chainsawed by Hancock. This tree had developed hollows and was well over 120 years old.



January 2009: Strzelecki Ranges: Jeffrey Creek Catchment. Logging of 38 year old Mt Ash inside cores and links rainforest reserve by Hancock. This forest had been spared logging under the October 2006 HoA, until being undermined by a new secret agreement in August 2008.



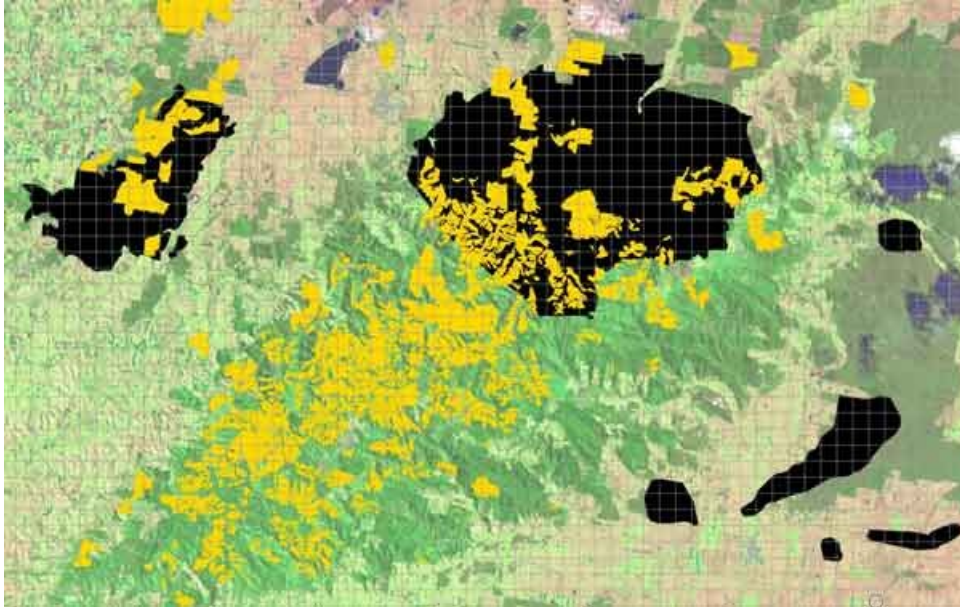
February 7 2009: Bushfires wipe out 25% of Hancock's hardwood estate and cause untold damage to Strzelecki Koala populations.



February 13 2009: Less than one week after the fires, Hancock enter College Creek, site of national conservation significance. College Creek was to be spared from logging under the October 2006 Heads of Agreement.



Where 75% of the Strzelecki timber ends up. Maryvale pulp mill.



Hancock's hardwood losses in the February 2009 fires. A non reported fact. Force Majeure was declared on existing contracts and new ones drawn up. Where does the Strzelecki Koala fit into all of this? Hancock's hardwood shortfall will become acute by 2012-3.



Survivor of the 2009 fires.



June 19 2009/Strzelecki Ranges: Community groups take a stand against logging at College Creek. Walk on action stopped work for the day and generated widespread media interest through Gippsland. Community groups had media enquiring about Hancock's role in renegeing on rainforest protection/Cores and Links Rainforest Agreement, shortfalls of volume, lack of fire insurance etc etc. Hancock's corporate image hitting rock bottom. But Government and Company don't care.



June 2009 College Creek/Strzelecki Ranges: Mixed species forest bowled over by Hancock to meet insatiable demands of [Maryvale Pulp Mill](#). What hope has these remnant trees of survival?



July 2009 Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek: Track 32 which is a public road. Hancock have removed Crown Reserve from the road, a practice they have been doing for 10 years. This practice is most likely illegal, yet Latrobe City Council ignores the issue.



July 2009 Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek: Track 32 Crown Reserve destroyed. This was prime koala habitat.



July 2009 Strzelecki Ranges/Morwell River West Branch Annes Track. Non plantation stump, probably ended up at local sawmill.



September 2009 College Creek/Strzelecki Ranges/Linkletters Road: Death of non plantation tree probably close to 100 years old. Logged by supposed plantation company.



September 2009 - O'Callaghan's Road Jack River/College Creek/Strzelecki Ranges: Non plantation trees destroyed. Prime koala habitat.



September 2009 O'Callaghan's Road Jack Rive Strzelecki Ranges: More logging near Callaghans Road. Reforestation and anything growing with reforested area can be logged by Hancock.



November 2009: Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek Catchment (Site of National Conservation Significance): Old growth Mountain Grey Gums inside the College Creek Catchment. The track will of course be widened to facilitate the movement of log trucks.



Jan 2010: Harvesting plantation in a site of National conservation significance. The site where Anne Westwood Manager TFN West Gippsland Owen Trumper General manger HVP Gippsland and Susie Zent Secretary FOGB visited December 19th 2009. This old growth site contains forest birds including Powerful Owls, Rosellas, Gang Gangs, Yellow tailed Black Cockatoos, Greater Gliders Yellow bellied Gliders, Mt. Bobucks and the endemic Strzelecki Koala. Where are these animals supposed to go when these hollow bearing trees are destroyed? Apart from the Koala all the above are hollow dependent fauna.



February 2010: Strzelecki Ranges. Dead Strzelecki Koala found on Roberts Road, in the Macks Creek catchment. This image probably best sums up HVP's role in the demise of this creature over the past 12 years.



February 2010: Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek: And yet another stag bulldozed over inside Strzelecki Cores and Links Rainforest Reserve.



April 2010: Strzelecki Ranges - College Creek Cores & Links Rainforest Reserve. Old growth logging by Hancock. Hancock claim they are a plantation company, however their licence allows them to log native forest which is defined as plantation 'ingrowth'.



April 2010: Strzelecki Ranges - Merrimans Creek Catchment - McBain's Road. Recent logging and burning of 40 year old reforestation by Hancock. This tree looks much older than 40 years.



June 2010: Strzelecki Ranges/Jack River - Kelly Track. Hundreds of regenerating bluegums poisoned with herbicide at Kelly Track. Future koala habitat.



July 2010: Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek. FSC certified clearfelling, destroying old growth in a rainforest reserve & site of national conservation significance. FSC certifier Smartwood, asleep at the wheel and haven't audited Hancock's on ground activities in the Strzeleckis since 2008, meaning Hancock can do whatever they like.



July 2010: Strzelecki Ranges/College Creek. Another old growth tree is destroyed in this rainforest reserve. Burning of logging debris also occurring. Where are the koalas supposed to go?



January 2011: Strzelecki Ranges/Morwell River Catchment/ContortaTrack: The trees at this area were set aside by previous Hancock managers as koala habitat. Current Hancock practice is obviously to wipe out koala habitat. How can the community trust this company?