

Tabled 28/5/09
Secretary DEWHA



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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SOUTH WEST NSW LOGGING OPERATIONS

I have today urged my Department to work closely with the New South Wales Government to resolve as quickly as possible outstanding issues regarding logging in South West New South Wales.

At issue is the potential for logging to impact on wetlands of international importance and other matters protected under the national environment law.

The potential for logging operations to impact on these matters has been the subject of ongoing discussions between the NSW Government and the Commonwealth for sometime and those discussions are continuing.

Importantly, subject to those discussions, forest harvesting will still be able to go ahead in a large part of the forest and the Commonwealth is examining a range of options to allow for this to happen.

All parties are keen to secure an outcome which is good for local jobs and good for the environment without the need to impose bans which significantly impact on employment in the region.

My expectation is that these matters can be resolved before May 31, however if necessary the Commonwealth is prepared to agree an appropriate timeline for the resolution of these matter with the New South Wales Government as part of these negotiations.

This is an important question of balance – protecting habitat and internationally listed wetlands, with the need to protect jobs in the region and I urge all parties to continue negotiations to get this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

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