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30 January 2003

The Secretary,  
The Rural, Regional Affairs & Transport Committee,  
Parliament House.  
Canberra.  
ACT 2600

Re: The Australian Plantation & Forestry Enquiry

Dear Sir/Madam,

after a number of years searching for what we considered to be the best place to live my wife and I decided that Tasmania had the best chance of giving the basics of 'clean air, clean water & clean food' in a pleasant and friendly environment.

Last year we settled on a property here at Middleton which appeared to offer all we required it consists of 23 acres with a creek on one boundary, a small orchard, good outbuildings and a capacity to run 15-20 cattle.

Our water supply for the cattle and orchard comes from a small dam on the creek (McDowells Rivulet) which anecdotal evidence indicates has never run dry although in prolonged dry periods the flow is minimal but sufficient.

Shortly after taking possession of the property in late May 2002 we were almost devastated to learn that Gunns Ltd. were planning to lay 1080 baits to wipe out all the fauna on a 1,000 acres, including the headwaters of McDowells Rivulet, prior to planting a plantation of Eucalyptus Nitens. The property had previously been clear felled and burned.

It is well known that E.nitens is a designer tree which to enable its fast growth absorbs enormous amounts of water especially around its 10 year growth period and is know to take up to 30% of the available water catchment.

2.

It is also well known that *E.nitens* in plantations attracts a beetle which is now controlled by applications of a spray Dominex 100.

Our concern is not with forestry per se but with the practices which are permitted to continue here in Tasmania.

There is an attitude that it is OK to;

1. Clear fell the existing species
2. Burn the remaining understorey
3. Clear fell the existing wildlife
4. Clear fell the existing insect life
5. Take control of the existing water supply to downstream users

The use of 1080 poison on ruminants is unacceptable in any circumstances as wallabies have been known to travel 2km or more after being baited and in an area where there are wedge tailed eagles regularly seen is totally wrong.

Dominex 100 is a poison specifically developed for the control of insects such as cockroaches in a confined commercial or industrial environment.

The manufacturers warn that use in the open environment is not recommended due to it being devastating to bees and if it gets in to the river systems is equally deadly on fish.

If the headwaters of McDowells Rivulet is taken over by a plantation of *E. Nitens* the obvious effect on our water supply, on which we totally rely for stock watering and orchard maintenance, this property becomes quite unviable as will other properties down stream.

We urgently request the committee to consider these matters and insist that in permitting the establishment of plantations in Tasmania all of these problems are recognised and that the Forestry Industry NOT be allowed to take over existing water supplies to the detriment of downstream users.

There must be a better and less wasteful way than clear felling and burning existing forests.

There must be a better way of controlling wildlife than blanket destruction. (How about developing an unpalatable timber species?)

There must be a better way of controlling beetles than using such a devastating spray as Dominex 100.

There must be protection for downstream users of existing river systems.

3.

The Forestry industry in Tasmania claims it is the most regulated industry in the country but it is obvious that the regulations may be in place but there is no one out in the field policing them.

Gunns Ltd illegal logging of the area of which we speak and subsequent prosecution by the Kingborough Council disclosed the total inadequacy of the supervisory process and even though the Council have placed 29 conditions on the subsequent approval it was admitted to me by a Councillor that they did not have the resources to ensure that all the conditions were met.

We are beginning to feel that Tasmania's "Clean Green" image is a myth which is a shame.

We rely on you to sort out the answers to these problems for the benefit of all

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P.H. Newsome', written over a horizontal line.

P.H. Newsome