



# CHIPSTOPPER

## Greens plan to end Native Forest Woodchipping



**T**he Greens have a plan to end woodchipping of SE native forests and to bring peace to the forests.

The six point plan will help the transition from native forests to plantations. It shows national leadership which the other parties so far have conspicuously lacked:

1. Close the Eden chipmill and relocate to Portland, SW Victoria where it will use only plantation timber from an abundant hardwood plantation resource on formerly cleared farmland.

2. **Remove all subsidies to the wood-chipping industry.** These are substantial and in some years are enough to keep the industry afloat. They include provision of road and port infrastructure and "education" activities by State Forests, but

the big one is SF's exemption from paying local government rates, which has been estimated at \$1million a year for the Bega Valley Shire alone.

3. **Restructure collection and publishing of Commonwealth statistical data** to clearly demonstrate whether or not strategies are working. Currently data does not adequately differentiate between native forests and plantations. "Commercial in Confidence" excuses must not conceal transparency of statistics.

4. **The Australian Government must support major employment growth in the SE NSW timber industry** through local processing. Bombala has large resources of softwood plantation timber. Governments must facilitate the planned sawmill and assist in retraining, relocation and other assistance to affected timber industry workers.

5. **Retain NSW public plantations in public hands.** Public ownership makes national planning and regulation of the timber Industry more likely. Transfer of woodchipping from native forests to plantations hinges on national planning and interstate cooperation. Privatisation puts at risk the likelihood of high value adding in the timber industry.

6. **Reject any certification of native forests logged for woodchips;** specifically the Wilson Tuckey Australian Forest Standard (AFS) must go. ISO 14001 must not be accepted as environmentally sustainable certification. Japanese woodchip importers are now demanding environmental certification for their woodchip import, but the regional industry is poised to adopt bodgey schemes which may help it meet the Japanese requirements►

## Kerin gets the bird



**W**ho's Who lists one of John Kerin's occupations before entering Parliament as "axeman."

It was fitting then, that Mr Kerin should end up as chairman of the board of State Forests of NSW.

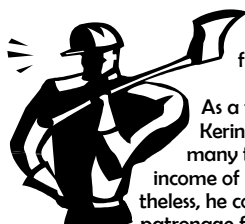
The former Hawke Government Minister is currently serving his second term in that position.

Birds Australia, or Royal Australian Ornithologists' Union is Australia's oldest conservation group. Founded in 1901 it is "dedicated to the study and conservation of native birds and their habitats." So why has it placed the former axeman on its board?

State Forests is an organisation which annihilates millions of birds each year by destroying their forest habitats.

The Who's Who listing of his interests makes no mention of birdwatching. Indeed, the nearest thing to an interest in ornithology was a stint as a "farmer" of battery hens.

Chipstop has written to Birds Australia challenging Mr Kerin's position on the board, as we believe



it presents him with fundamental conflicts of interest.

As a former Cabinet Minister, John Kerin receives a generous pension, many times the average household income of Bega Valley residents. Nevertheless, he continues to receive generous patronage from his NSW Labor Government mates. How else can we account for his May appointment to the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority whose role is to work for the well-being of catchments from Wollongong to the Victorian border?

This appointment is just as troubling as his Birds Australia position. And just as incompatible with his State Forests job.

It too places him in a position of serious conflict of interest, particularly since the CMA includes all the NSW forests which are woodchipped at the Eden mill. No State forests boss can come to matters of catchment protection with an impartial perspective and we believe Mr Kerin should go.

As MP for Werriwa, John Kerin played 'hard to get' with the NSW Labor right wing, before eventually coming across. A cynic might see this ongoing patronage from the Carr Government as his reward and an example to other waiverers►

## What's in a name?

**T**here must be something, because the Japanese owners of the Eden chipmill are taking a lot of trouble over theirs.

The former Harris-Daishowa (Australia) Pty Ltd became South East Fibre Exports last year in the wake of two identity changes by its majority shareholder.

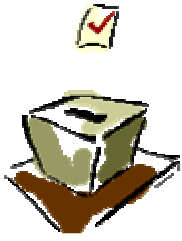
In 2001, the Daishowa Paper Manufacturing was taken over by Nippon Paper Industries. The resulting holding company became Nippon Unipac.

In 2003 the papermaking arm of the new empire reverted to the former name Nippon Paper Industries and the reviled Daishowa name disappeared from the paper industry altogether.

Just as we were getting used to this, in May 2004, Nippon Unipac announced yet another name change, taking on the name, Nippon Paper Group Inc. There must be some point to all this, but it's not obvious to us►



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## ELECTION 2004

## Loggers and Labor

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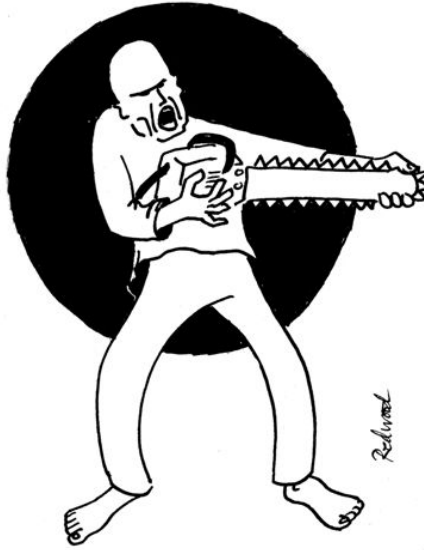
hatever you might think about the Labor Party parachuting rockstar

Peter Garrett into Parliament, one thing is clear.

Within days of the speculation starting, the loggers union, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Engineering Union (CFMEU) had come out savaging Garrett. Loggers should be thankful for the union amalgamations a few years ago which placed them in powerful company.

Although the forestry division is a tiny part of the CFMEU, when the big union decides to flex its muscles, the Labor Party generally jumps.

This time it backed off, but usually it doesn't.



In 1995, Bob Carr promised to end export woodchipping by the year 2000. Carr won office in the election that year without a single logging seat and thus no

political debts to the loggers and no political risks to run by keeping his promise.

In 1999 Carr legislated to protect the woodchipping industry for 20 years and has propped it up with taxpayer subsidies ever since.

How did this happen? The answer is: the CFMEU. Without its clout inside the Labor Party, the industry could have gone years ago.

The woodchipping companies do not make large political donations, and in fact in most years giving nothing.

Let's hope the CFMEU's inability to keep Peter Garrett out of Kingsford Smith is a sign of its waning power▶



### *"Not just a success, a complete sellout"*

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espite being one in the eye for the CFMEU, the Garrett entry into Labor politics is bad news for the environment.

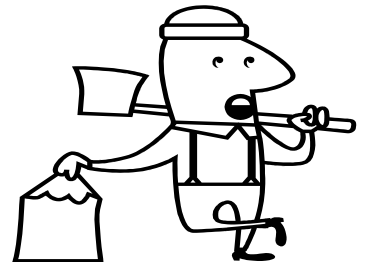
In the short term, it will attract some celebrity struck voters away from The Greens in the mistaken belief that they are voting for a greener Labor.

In the longer term, Labor will not change. This move is about marketing and image, not substance or real change. In his first 7.30 Report interview after announcing his candidature, Garrett gave us plenty to worry about. The forest campaign on the mainland Australia is all over bar the shouting, it seems.

### Certification "greenwash"

Nippon Paper has signalled it may be prepared to settle for the Wilson Tuckey *Australian Forestry Standard* as a form of environmental certification. This makes a mockery of certification and would mean business as usual in the south east.

Nippon announced in August last year that it will require all of its woodchip imports by 2008 to be either from plantation or certified forests. This policy means nothing and is blatant "greenwashing" if they accept the AFS.



### Sparkes fired up

**B**ill Taylor is the Councillor who moved the amendment to the Bega Valley Shire's 2002 motion supporting the woodchipping industry and bagging protesters who want to stop it. His amendment tacked on the oxymoronic clause that, by the way, they really liked the environment as well as the woodchipping industry. The Council passed the motion 7 votes to 2.

John Sparkes is the General Manager of the Eden chipmill, so it was interesting to see him on duty on Council Election Day in March this year working for Bill Taylor at the Merimbula polling booth.

Whether this means anything at all, who knows, but, interesting all the same.

