



Dr Christos Mantziaris
6th Floor, St James Hall
169 Phillip Street
Sydney NSW 2000

16 August 2011

Dear Dr Mantziaris,

Re: Submission in support of protection of Mumbulla State Forest, Murrah State Forest and Bodalla State Forest

We write on behalf of the NSW Greens to support two applications currently before the Minister, for emergency protection orders under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984* (Cth).

The applications relate to three state forests located in South East NSW: Mumbulla State Forest, Murrah State Forest and Bodalla State Forest. These forests are bordered by or immediately adjacent to existing national parks, Biamanga and Gulaga, with unique Aboriginal heritage values as recognised by the return of the parks to Aboriginal ownership in 2006.

The two applications before you have been put forward by respected Aboriginal Elders Ms Georgina Parsons and Mr Barry Kelly.

The applications are supported by the Greens as they relate to well documented areas of Aboriginal heritage significance which, unfortunately, have been and continue to be under immediate threat from logging despite ongoing calls for protection by traditional owners. This includes the logging of Bodalla State Forest compartment 3046 in 2007 and recent illegal logging undertaken within the boundaries of the sacred men's area, and declared and gazetted Aboriginal Place, at Mumbulla Mountain.

In supporting Ms Parsons and Mr Kelly's applications the Greens note that representatives of the Yuin Nation and the local Aboriginal communities have been campaigning for protection of the sacred twin 'Mother Mountain' and 'Father Mountain', Gulaga and Mumbulla, and the related song lines which connect and extend to the surrounding areas for more than three decades.

Detailed documentation of the significance of the areas exists in reports such as those commissioned with the support of the Federal Government in the 1980s and the recent detailed publication by the NSW Registrar of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act entitled *Biamanga and Guilga: Aboriginal Cultural Association with Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks*.

Although the Aboriginal community has been able to gain some legal protection of a limited number of sacred areas from the NSW Government, such as Mumbulla Mountain, this protection falls far short of proper recognition and protection for the range of sacred and significant areas referred to in the ATSIHPA applications. The location of sacred sites within State Forests and the incursions by forestry activities into even those limited areas which have been offered nominal State protection indicates the urgency of the threat.

The Greens urge the Minister to act to protect these important areas of Aboriginal heritage.

David Shoebridge MLC
Greens NSW Heritage &
Forestry spokesperson



Senator Lee Rhiannon
Australian Greens Forestry
spokesperson

Jan Barham MLC
Greens NSW Aboriginal
Affairs spokesperson