



# Sutherland Shire Environment Centre

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## Submission on the TPP-11 Customs Amendment Bills

I make this submission on TP-11 on behalf of the Board and members of the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre (SSEC). Our Centre has been active in the Shire and its regions and interested and active on national and global matters for almost 30 years. Sutherland Shire Environment Centre is a member and supporter of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network.

SSEC stands firmly opposed to the terms of the TPP-11 because of their deleterious impacts on environment, community and the democratic decision making processes which our governments are given responsibility to uphold.

SSEC believes the process of developing such trade agreements must be made transparent. The secretive processes that operate now are most certainly undemocratic because they do not allow independent assessment of the economic, environmental, health and other impacts of the agreement. Our elected parliamentarians must be given the time to review and critique the draft agreements. And they must be afforded the opportunity to vote on each aspect of the agreement. Furthermore, SSEC believes that, given the wide-ranging implications of trade agreements, the direction, principles and text of the drafts must be made available to the public for comment. Anything less smacks of deliberate concealment.

SSEC believes trade agreements must be signed with the interests of Australian workers, communities, industries and environment at heart, not the interests of corporations, foreign investors and foreign governments. The Australian Government is charged with the responsibility of looking after Australian citizens and the environments we live in. And this responsibility must guide all (trade) decision-making processes of the government. It is an indictment on our government that it needs to be reminded of its responsibilities to protect democracy.

As a result of the undemocratic trade agreement process, Parliament does not get to vote on the whole TPP-11 agreement, but only on the implementation of legislation. The only chance for the Parliament to reject the substantial provisions of the TPP-11 which are not in the national interest is to reject the Customs Amendment Bills. Therefore, the SSEC urges the Committee to reject these bills.

Yours faithfully,

Tassia Kolesnikow (Chair, Sutherland Shire Environment Centre)

Submissions are due September 10, and can be submitted electronically on the website or sent to the Committee by email at [seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:seniorclerk.committees.sen@aph.gov.au). This Committee will report on October 10.