

ANGELA BENNETT

Submission ID: 204548

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**Organisation:** N/A

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**Location:** New South Wales

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** N/A

Submission date: 10/12/2024 5:56:20 PM

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**Topic 1. Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW**

The logging of native forests is not sustainable. This is bourn out by the fact that even though Forestry have continually over estimated the amount of harvestable timber available, the yield has declined by 40% since 2010, despite the protection for mature trees being removed in 2018 in attempt to get more wood. .

Logging renders the forests more susceptible to fire and increased intensity of fires, reducing the availability of harvestable timber, as well as causing erosion and the pollution of water ways, with increased weeds and invasive species.

It is not financially sustainable - the Government, or the tax payer, currently subsidises NSW Forestry. This is totally unacceptable.

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**Topic 2. Environmental and cultural values of forests, including threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage values**

Mature forests are critical not only for their Abogirial cultural heritage; but for all. The forests of SE NSW are globally acknowledged as a bio-diversity hotspot, and we are only just beginning to learn that they can be a source of medically valuable compounds.

The koala is a recognised First Nations' totem, and as such needs to be protected. Additionally it is an iconic Australian animal - ask anyone anywhere in the world the first thing they think of when you say "Australia" , and they say kangaroos and koalas. The State Government announced the creation of the Great Koala National Park, so it is appalling that before the Park is actually created they are allowing logging in the equivalent to 1 hectare in every 24 hectares of the proposed National Park, which is also 4 times the volume of logging in other native forests. Over 170 species rely on hollows that only exist in old growth forest for dens and nests. Just look at the Greater Glider, an endangered species. Forestry are not complying with their requirement to identify den trees correctly, and will be responsible for irretrievable harm to so many species. 269 nationally listed threatened species, both flora and fauna, rely on our native forests, and are put are greater risk of extinction due to logging.

Old forests absorb and release water which flows into streams and rivers, but if they are logged and regrow, all that water is used for regrowth. As the driest continent on earth we should be doing all in our power to protect our water sources.

Forests play a huge role in the mental well-being of many people - a walk through a beautiful forest is far better than any anti-depressant pill.

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**Topic 3. Demand for timber products, particularly as relates to NSW housing, construction, mining, transport and retail**

The vast majority, as much as 91%, of timber used in housing and construction comes from plantation timber. Modern technology is also creating products that replace the need for timber. Most of the products from forestry logging are low value and can be sourced alternatively. Our native forests should not be cut down for wood chips.

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Again I would reiterate we should not be subsidising the destruction of native forests for wood chips.

**Topic 4. The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs**

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As stated previously 91% of of log production comes from plantations. The use of the these logs needs to be prioritised for saw and veneer logs, instead of wood chips.

Hardwood Timber for housing, etc. should be harvested from plantations and private land, but strict conditions should be implemented and applied to the harvesting from private land.

**Topic 5. The role of State Forests in maximising the delivery of a range of environmental, economic and social outcomes and options for diverse management, including Aboriginal forest management models**

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As mentioned previously, state forests are a global biodiversity hot spot, and provide both ecological and economic benefits to NSW. Covering over 2 million hectares in NSW they provide a wide range of benefits to local areas, including revenue from tourism; water quality and carbon storage and abatement.

The recovery management operated by First Nations Ranger Programme has proved hugely successful.

Would Forestry NSW continue logging state forests is they were not receiving the subsidies they do from the Government? This money could be better utilised in other areas, e.g. health, education. etc.

**Topic 6. Opportunities to realise carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity markets, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks, including the greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risks to forests**

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We are in a climate emergency. Native Forests are estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year. Logging reduces the amount of stored carbon by more than 50% of the original value. Stopping logging would enable previously logged forests to regain lost carbon, and contribute to meeting our emissions target - it would be the equivalent to removing 840,000 cars from the roads per year.