

# Public submission

DAVID WILLIAMS

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *Attached overleaf*

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# **1. Sustainability of Current and Future Forestry Operations in NSW**

Current native forest logging practices are largely financially and ecologically unsustainable; depleting biodiversity, degrading ecosystems, and threatening the survival of key species whilst at the same time costing the tax payer money. This results in long-term environmental damage that may be impossible to reverse, for no net gain whatsoever.

- Transitioning to sustainable forestry operations, such as plantation timber, can meet industry demands while preserving native forests.
- Sustainable plantation practices will support long-term ecological health, including the regeneration of forests and the protection of habitats for endangered species.
- Promoting sustainable operations can position NSW as a leader in environmentally conscious forestry, creating new markets and enhancing the state's global reputation.

## **2. Environmental and Cultural Values of Forests**

The destruction of native forests for logging erodes both environmental health and cultural heritage, particularly for communities who rely on forests for spiritual, cultural and recreational practices.

- Forests could act as critical refuges for threatened species such as spotted tail quolls; thereby preserving biodiversity and ecosystem stability.

- Protecting forests enhances the cultural and spiritual significance for Indigenous peoples, promoting cultural preservation and reconciliation.
- Forests provide essential ecosystem services such as water filtration, carbon storage, and climate regulation, which benefit regional communities and broader society.

### **3. Demand for Timber Products**

Continued reliance on native forest logging to meet timber demand exacerbates environmental degradation and puts unsustainable pressure on ecosystems.

- Shifting to plantation-based timber production reduces the strain on native forests and promotes more sustainable industry practices.
- Advancing technologies allow plantation timber to meet or even exceed the quality standards required for construction and manufacturing, supporting a viable timber supply without environmental harm.
- A transition towards other sustainable timber alternatives can foster innovation and create new jobs in the growing field of eco-friendly construction materials.

### **4. The Future of Softwood and Hardwood Plantations and Private Native Forestry**

Relying on poorly managed plantations can still contribute to deforestation if land-clearing are not carefully regulated, potentially leading to loss of biodiversity. However, most cattle farmers are not

foresters and do not have the training and resources to be good plantation managers.

- Expanding well-managed softwood and hardwood plantations provides a reliable source of timber without compromising native ecosystems.
- Private native forestry initiatives, when managed sustainably, can supplement timber supply while also supporting local economies and providing incentives for landowners to conserve biodiversity.
- Shifting to plantations allows for more predictable timber production, ensuring a stable supply chain that is resilient to the environmental risks associated with native forest logging.
- Training and specialisation need to be directed in this area.

## **5. Role of State Forests in Delivering Environmental, Economic, and Social Outcomes**

If poorly managed, State Forests risk becoming financially unsustainable, requiring government subsidies to remain operational while contributing little in terms of timber production or environmental value.

- Properly managed State Forests can deliver significant economic benefits through eco-tourism, creating jobs and supporting regional economies.
- Preserving State Forests enhances their role in carbon sequestration, contributing to climate change mitigation efforts while generating income through carbon markets.

- Implementing diverse management models, particularly those that involve Aboriginal forest management, fosters social outcomes by empowering Indigenous communities and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge.
- Well managed state forests provide for a range of recreational activities that are not allowed in National Parks. This can be leveraged as an income stream. State forest managers should be looking at charging fees for camping, mountain biking, horse riding etc. in state forests.

## **Opportunities to Realise Carbon and Biodiversity Benefits**

Logging in native forests releases large amounts of stored carbon, which accelerates climate change and negates efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

- Protecting forests enables them to act as carbon sinks, sequestering significant amounts of CO<sub>2</sub> and helping NSW meet its climate targets.
- Restored and protected forests foster biodiversity, allowing ecosystems to recover and become more resilient to environmental changes and bushfires.
- Engaging in carbon and biodiversity markets presents economic opportunities, offering financial incentives for conservation efforts while supporting sustainable development goals.

In conclusion, the review of the NSW forestry industry provides a pivotal opportunity to address the ecological,

cultural, economic, and legal challenges posed by current practices. Native forest logging is unsustainable and harmful to biodiversity, ecosystems, and cultural heritage. A transition towards sustainable forestry operations, particularly through the expansion of plantation timber and tourism/recreation based revenue streams offers a viable path forward. Protecting forests not only preserves critical environmental and cultural values but also presents significant opportunities in carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, and economic diversification through eco-tourism and carbon markets. By embracing non-destructive management models, including Indigenous approaches, NSW can foster a forestry industry that balances environmental health, community well-being, and economic growth.