

ROBERT DRURY

Submission ID: 203533

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Organisation: N/A

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Location: New South Wales

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Supporting materials uploaded: N/A

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Submission date: 10/9/2024 3:18:39 PM

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

The only way that future forestry operations in NSW can be sustainable is if all timber is sourced from plantations. We must reverse the destruction of habitat (aka intact native forests). Habitat loss is the major reason for biodiversity loss.

The extraction of logs by NSW Forestry Corp contractors, who operate without oversight severely impacts forest ecosystems.

The methods used to extract timber are destructive. The proliferation of exotic weed species after logging is destructive. The practice of logging compartments on average every 30 years prevents the development of healthy forest ecosystems.

It is time we stopped the logging of Native Forests in NSW.

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

There is much more value in ensuring our Public Native Forests function as healthy and thriving forest ecosystems, support the recovery of threatened species and preserve the significant Aboriginal cultural sites, many of which haven't been identified yet than being largely pulped and woodchipped.

We are at extreme tipping points in terms of environmental destruction. Surely, we can take notice of what science is telling us and make mature and informed decisions and not just see forests as a resource to be exploited.

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

All timber whether hardwood or softwood must be sourced from plantations. The hardwood timber that is sourced from Native Forest Logging can be substituted using more sustainable and environmentally sensitive products. The use of hardwood in houses is largely for aesthetics and only affordable to the rich. If we have to do without Spotted Gum flooring or Blackbutt staircases so what. Australian Government data show that by 2022, 90 percent of native forest logging went to make paper or woodchips (ABARES 2021).

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

We have known since the late 1970's that we should have been developing a timber industry based on plantations only. We do not need to clear any existing forest to create these plantations. There is enough cleared and unproductive land out there already. Private Native Forestry should be stopped, and landholders compensated for preserving their native forests as habitat. This would just be expanding the Biodiversity Conservation Trust agreements that are already available.

We already have the mechanisms and technology to replace both the logging of both Public and Private Forests.

**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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Many more opportunities for employment can be created if State Forests are returned to the public for use by the public and logging stopped. There are opportunities to develop visitor facilities, creating plantations, regenerating degraded forests, fire management.

The Hardwood Division of Forestry Corp is heavily subsidised. It is not a profitable industry. "In the past 2 years alone, 29 million of taxpayer money was spent subsidising the native forest logging division of Forestry Corp." (J. Mumford NCC June 2023)

These subsidies could be simply redirected into managing the forests to deliver a range of environmental, economic and social outcomes.

**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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It is quite evident that we are in a climate crisis. The world's climate scientists are exasperated. We urgently need to curb our carbon emissions at the same time drawing carbon from the atmosphere if we are to limit global heating.

Forests act as carbon sinks. Older trees absorb and store more carbon dioxide than younger trees. We need old growth forests.

Logged forests dry out more than unlogged forests creating highly flammable conditions during dry periods. In the 2019-20 bushfires 42% of NSW State Forests were burnt, many in wildfire conditions. This is going to occur more frequently.