

LUCIANA BOWEN

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**Organisation:** *Save Wallum Inc*

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**Location:** *New South Wales*

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

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

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Native forest logging is not economically viable. The industry is heavily subsidised by taxpayers, operating at a loss for years. The hardwood timber industry in NSW is operating at a loss. The public is essentially subsidising an industry that damages the environment, biodiversity, and our climate. In contrast, softwood plantations are more sustainable and profitable, providing 91% of Australia's log production. Transitioning to softwood plantations would create a sustainable forestry industry while protecting our native forests. In contrast, the transition to plantation-based forestry would be more sustainable and profitable.

Reports indicate that protecting forests for tourism, recreation, and carbon credits would generate more economic value than logging. The yield from public native forests has declined by 40% since 2010. The maths are simple, logging native forests is not sustainable on any level.

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

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Native forests are home to numerous threatened species, including the Koala, Greater Glider, and Swift Parrot. Logging destroys the habitats these species rely on, pushing them closer to extinction. Protecting our forests is crucial for preventing the extinction of 150 threatened species in NSW.

Protections for mature trees were removed in 2018 and logging was intensified to try and get more wood from native forests. Logging of native forests reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees. There are 174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests, logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests

The 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires severely damaged many of these habitats, and continued logging in already vulnerable areas exacerbates the threat to wildlife. These threatened species are meant to be protected not made homeless. The continued logging of native forests after the catastrophic black summer fires and massive east coast floods is utter insanity. These threatened species are heading to extinction and no economic fearmongering can ever justify nor logically argue otherwise. Contributing to their extinction is criminal on so many levels.

Native forests hold significant cultural value, especially for Indigenous communities. These forests are not only vital for biodiversity but also for the cultural heritage and traditional practices of First Nations people. Clearly government couldn't care less about these cultural values and merely pay them lip service.

Public native forests have much more significant economic, social, cultural and ecological value when they are allowed to function naturally without logging.

Native forests are crucial for the health of our soils and waterways. The long term cycle of organic matter breakdown in native forests, sometimes over hundreds of years, is what keeps soil in these areas rich in nutrients. Our native forests are also critical for the health of our waterways. Forests create water vapor flows, which creates rain. These flows are vital for the survival of all life on earth. Evidence now points to even limited destruction of forests can change the whole climate of

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a region. Forests also improve and protect the quality of our waterways by preventing erosion, breaking down pollutants and providing shade.

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

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Simple plan for future demands by planting more native timber plantations End native forest logging immediately by: - An immediate commitment to end native forest logging: The government must act swiftly to protect NSW's remaining forests.

- A fair transition plan for the industry: Workers and communities must be supported in transitioning to the softwood plantation industry to ensure sustainable livelihoods and forest management.

- A moratorium on new logging operations: While developing a transition plan, it is vital to freeze all new logging activities to protect critical habitats.

- A comprehensive plan to regenerate and manage native forests: Investment in long-term regeneration and management strategies will restore forest health and enhance their resilience to climate change.

### **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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Logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023. Native forest logging contributes only 2.4 million of the total 25 million cubic metres for that year

Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported

Hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips

Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses identified in this section

Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods.

Subsidising the logging of public native forests by the Forestry Corporation is non-competitive and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry

The native forest hardwood section of the Forestry Corporation operates at a loss that runs into tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of the NSW public through government subsidies. This is ludicrous and criminal. No government policy narrative can rationalise such poor economics.

### **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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Greenwashing terms like this do nothing to hide the fact that state forests do not provide any measurable nor satisfactory outcomes environmentally, economically, socially or culturally. The path forward is clear: transitioning to plantation-based forestry while protecting and regenerating our native forests. This will not only help address climate change but also protect biodiversity, reduce fire risks, and create sustainable economic opportunities. Now is the time to act to ensure the survival of our forests and the species that depend on them. No amount of political spin through greenwashing terms such as 'sustainable logging' will ever convince the public that it is legitimate.

**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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: Native forests in NSW play a critical role in mitigating climate change by absorbing and storing large amounts of carbon. Logging disrupts this process, turning forests from carbon sinks into carbon sources. Protecting and restoring these forests is essential to meeting Australia's net zero targets. Current estimates suggest that native forest logging releases 3.6 million tonnes of carbon annually, stopping it would be the equivalent of taking 840,000 cars off the road each year. Therefore, stopping native forest logging would contribute significantly to emissions reductions. Forests, particularly healthy mature forests, generate rainfall, cool the landscape and clean the air. Preserving native forests is clearly a no brainer. Native forest logging disrupts the natural humidity and microclimate of forests, making them more susceptible to fire. By destroying the forest canopy, logging increases the amount of dry, flammable fuel on the forest floor. Logging increases fire risks by disrupting forest ecosystems and making them more prone to drying out, which leads to more flammable conditions. This is particularly concerning given the increasing frequency and intensity of bushfires driven by climate change. There will be no refuges left for threatened species with more frequent extreme weather events predicted and accelerating. Ecosystems will continue to breakdown from these extreme weather events and logging is contributing to their collapse.

## **Submission to End Native Forest Logging in NSW**

The urgency to end native forest logging in NSW is clear. The environmental, economic, and social consequences of continuing this practice far outweigh any short-term gains. Here are several compelling reasons to cease native forest logging immediately:

**Climate Mitigation and Carbon Storage:** Native forests in NSW play a critical role in mitigating climate change by absorbing and storing large amounts of carbon. Logging disrupts this process, turning forests from carbon sinks into carbon sources. Protecting and restoring these forests is essential to meeting Australia's net zero targets. Current estimates suggest that native forest logging releases 3.6 million tonnes of carbon annually, stopping it would be the equivalent of taking 840,000 cars off the road each year. Therefore, stopping native forest logging would contribute significantly to emissions reductions. Forests, particularly healthy mature forests, generate rainfall, cool the landscape and clean the air. Preserving native forests is clearly a no brainer.

**Biodiversity Protection:** Native forests are home to numerous threatened species, including the Koala, Greater Glider, and Swift Parrot. Logging destroys the habitats these species rely on, pushing them closer to extinction. Protecting our forests is crucial for preventing the extinction of 150 threatened species in NSW.

Protections for mature trees were removed in 2018 and logging was intensified to try and get more wood from native forests. Logging of native forests reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees. There are 174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests, logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests

The 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires severely damaged many of these habitats, and continued logging in already vulnerable areas exacerbates the threat to wildlife. These threatened species are meant to be protected not made homeless. The continued logging of native forests after the catastrophic black summer fires and massive east coast floods is utter insanity. These threatened species are heading to extinction and no economic fearmongering can ever justify nor logically argue otherwise. Contributing to their extinction is criminal on so many levels.

**Fire Risk Reduction:** Native forest logging disrupts the natural humidity and microclimate of forests, making them more susceptible to fire. By destroying the forest canopy, logging increases the amount of dry, flammable fuel on the forest floor. Logging increases fire risks by disrupting forest ecosystems and making them more prone to drying out, which leads to more flammable conditions. This

is particularly concerning given the increasing frequency and intensity of bushfires driven by climate change. There will be no refuges left for threatened species with more frequent extreme weather events predicted and accelerating. Ecosystems will continue to breakdown from these extreme weather events and logging is contributing to their collapse.

**Economic Inefficiency:** Native forest logging is not economically viable. The industry is heavily subsidised by taxpayers, operating at a loss for years. The hardwood timber industry in NSW is operating at a loss. The public is essentially subsidising an industry that damages the environment, biodiversity, and our climate. In contrast, softwood plantations are more sustainable and profitable, providing 91% of Australia's log production. Transitioning to softwood plantations would create a sustainable forestry industry while protecting our native forests. In contrast, the transition to plantation-based forestry would be more sustainable and profitable.

Reports indicate that protecting forests for tourism, recreation, and carbon credits would generate more economic value than logging. The yield from public native forests has declined by 40% since 2010. The maths are simple, logging native forests is not sustainable on any level.

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through government subsidies. This is ludicrous and criminal. No government policy narrative can rationalise such poor economics.

**Cultural and Ecological Importance:** Native forests hold significant cultural value, especially for Indigenous communities. These forests are not only vital for biodiversity but also for the cultural heritage and traditional practices of First Nations people. Clearly government couldn't care less about these cultural values and merely pay them lip service.

Public native forests have much more significant economic, social, cultural and ecological value when they are allowed to function naturally without logging.

Native forests are crucial for the health of our soils and waterways. The long term cycle of organic matter breakdown in native forests, sometimes over hundreds of years, is what keeps soil in these areas rich in nutrients. Our native forests are also critical for the health of our waterways. Forests create water vapor flows, which creates rain. These flows are vital for the survival of all life on earth.

Evidence now points to even limited destruction of forests can change the whole climate of a region. Forests also improve and protect the quality of our waterways by preventing erosion, breaking down pollutants and providing shade.

The path forward is clear: transitioning to plantation-based forestry while protecting and regenerating our native forests. This will not only help address climate change but also protect biodiversity, reduce fire risks, and create sustainable economic opportunities. Now is the time to act to ensure the survival of our forests and the species that depend on them. No amount of political spin through greenwashing terms such as "sustainable logging" will ever convince the public that it is legitimate.

**The Need for Immediate Action** We call for:

- **An immediate commitment to end native forest logging:** The government must act swiftly to protect NSW's remaining forests.
- **A fair transition plan for the industry:** Workers and communities must be supported in transitioning to the softwood plantation industry to ensure sustainable livelihoods and forest management.
- **A moratorium on new logging operations:** While developing a transition plan, it is vital to freeze all new logging activities to protect critical habitats.
- **A comprehensive plan to regenerate and manage native forests:** Investment in long-term regeneration and management strategies will restore forest health and enhance their resilience to climate change.

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