

ANGELA EARTH

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**Organisation:** N/A

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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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The native forest logging industry is not only unsustainable but is at present causing considerable damage in the area where I live. I lost my home, sheds, garden and lifestyle in the 2019 bushfire. I saw with my own eyes that logged areas burn hotter.

Evidence shows that areas that are logged and then regenerated are more flammable, thereby contributing significantly to fire risks. (Lindenmayer and Zylstra 2022). An analysis across the fire footprint of the Black Summer fires of N.S.W. show that logged forests always burn at higher severity than intact forests (Lindenmayer et al. 2022b).

Native forest logging is also unsustainable because it can only continue to operate through major subsidies from government and continues to run at considerable financial loss. Frontier Economics 2023 estimated that for the year 2019-2020, Forestry Corp of NSW received \$249 million in subsidies and grants and still made a loss of \$28m. This is clearly unsustainable and damaging the public purse.

Logging reduces critical habitat for species such as large old hollow-bearing trees.

Logging also changes the composition of forests making them unsuitable for leaf-feeding specialist animals such as the Koala and Southern Greater Glider (Au et al. 2019). Two species that are struggling to survive in healthy numbers since the 2019-20 bushfires.

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

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Forests generate rainfall and cool the land, clean the air, provide homes for a range of threatened species, are important for recreation and improved health, filter and regulate runoff to streams, and remove carbon dioxide from the air and store it in their wood and soils. If we want to save NSW's 269 nationally listed threatened forest species, including the endangered Koala and Greater Glider mentioned above it is clear, and urgent, that we stop logging their homes.

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

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Demands for timber can largely be met from plantations and have been increasingly so for many years.

The predominance of sawn timber from plantations, and of woodchips and paper pulp from native forests, is one of the key reasons why the former is profitable and has high levels of employment, whereas the latter is unprofitable and has dwindling levels of employment (Keith et al. 2016, see also Keith et al. 2017).

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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**

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The future of the forest and timber industries in NSW is in plantations. Hardwood and softwood plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production. The plantation industry is far more

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profitable, employs far more people, generates fewer GHG emissions, and is significantly less fire prone whereas, as mentioned above, native forest logging is running at considerable financial loss. The Government of NSW should transition rapidly out of native forest logging to a plantation-only industry within 2 years. It is the obvious thing to do to support the future health of the timber industry and the forests. It is also in the best interest of taxpayers to stop logging of public native 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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In 2023 Forestry Corporation lost \$15 million on their hardwood operations, that's a cost of \$1,281 for each hectare logged! This is despite being paid \$31 million for their community service obligations that year and obtaining tens of millions in regular equity injections.

It is an outrage that we are paying to degrade forests and log the homes of threatened species! The evidence is clear that public forests are of greater economic benefit for water yields, tourism and carbon storage than they are for logging.

**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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The biodiversity benefits of intact native forests have been well documented (Mackey et al. 2015, Watson et al. 2018). The best way to maintain the biodiversity values of native forests is to stop logging them, including in NSW (Ward et al. 2024).

Stopping logging will enable forests to regain their lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our climate targets.

In numerous data collected since 2019/20 wildfires it is clear that climate changes are causing increased droughts and fires and causing significant impact on trees, forest species and rainforests. It is essential that logging stop to allow forests to reduce the impacts of climate heating by removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and recover their integrity to better withstand future disasters.

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