

BRIAN AND ELLY BAKER

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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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**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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Dear Independent Forestry Panel members,

Thank you for the opportunity to make submission to the consultative process.

We are not members of or representative of any particular interest group or commercial body. We represent ourselves as sharing the hopes and aspirations of many of the people of NSW for our natural resource assets to be valued and managed in order to yield their greatest long term beneficial impact on social and environmental health.

The focus of our representation is the harvesting of timber resources from native forests, which we see as a subset of the scope of the panel's consultation. In particular we are concerned for the panel's review and modelling to recognise native forest as an asset (Note 1 -below) of the people of NSW that provides significant potential social and environmental benefit with a public value so much greater than the commercial return from removing critical elements of the asset composition.

The native forest asset is a complex ecological mix that exists and survives through critical species interdependencies, as such this asset can be easily degraded to a point where the true long-term potential value to the people of NSW is lost. Allowing this to occur would be a failure of State governance.

There is now a 'watershed' opportunity in the challenging task of unravelling the historical permissions granted to the commercial utilisation of timber resources from the native forest asset.

Historically there were no economically advantageous alternatives to harvesting native forest timber to provide materials to support our State and National development through creation of social and economic infrastructure. We have fortunately progressed to the stage where we no longer have need to waste timber from our valuable native forest asset on railway sleepers, house frames, bridges, wharves, power poles, etc.

We now have the opportunity to make change and benefit from utilisation of products produced from alternate and sustainable materials.

Businesses based on harvesting and utilising native forest timber have reached the end of their useful period of service to the people of NSW. They have now become a burden through their impact in devaluing the true long-term potential of our native forest asset to deliver public value. Fortunately they are redundant as there are businesses that replace their service to the people of NSW by producing alternate products that are not sourced from native forests.

Members of NSW Parliament, having been elected by the people to represent the interests of the people with loyalty, have the ability to use this watershed opportunity to develop a Forestry Industry Action Plan that ensures commercial business practice does no harm to the public native forest asset and importantly to its ability to yield maximum long term public value.

Loyalty to the people puts commercial operations in the service of the people.

In summary;

## Public submission

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The native forest asset of NSW has potential to deliver long term public value in the form of social and environmental benefits. This public value far exceeds the short term commercial return obtained from damaging the asset base with the removal of trees.

There are viable product alternatives that support the economic growth of NSW.

Public perception is that sustainable harvesting from native forest is in practice a failure arising from a narrow and simplistic concept of asset maintenance.

It is expected of the NSW Government to demonstrate loyalty to the people of NSW by developing a Forestry Industry Action Plan that maintains the native forest asset to deliver maximum public value free from risk imposed from short term commercial gain operations.

We respectfully request the Independent Forestry Panel assist the NSW Government in its important governance role by informing them of the full public value potential of the native forest asset and providing them a risk analysis of the impact of commercial operations on long term public value.

Note 1. Reference to 'native forest asset' is inclusive of public and private land holding. Reference to the 'public value' of 'native forest asset' is inclusive of asset on public and private land holding as all such asset contributes to a range of public benefits and value.

Yours sincerely

Brian and Elly Baker

**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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Please consider the submission at Category 4 above as also applying to this category