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

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I believe the Softwood Division of Forestry Corporation (FC) is sustainable and professionally managed. The Hardwood Division however is a timber pillaging operation which has destroyed vast areas of critical habitat and old growth forest. It's not sustainable on so many fronts and it doesn't even make money. Indeed FC costs NSW taxpayers millions of dollars every year. How by any measure could this be considered sustainable?

The reality of FC industrial hardwood harvesting is that:

Soils are left severely compacted and depleted usually with subsoil on the surface.

Streams are not adequately protected by buffer zones, indeed they are often damaged when dozers push timber trash downhill to create windrows for burning.

Following heavy rain the compacted soils erode and deliver mud and silt to receiving waters.

Flooded rivers loaded with mud and silt are turbid with reduced oxygenation and consequent damage to aquatic life. The costs of water treatment (drinking water) and river remediation is borne by Councils not FC.

Even where FC have planted seeds for re-growth after destroying a forest this management practice is utterly inadequate as only one or two species are grown.

The two FC preferred eucalyptus species are not habitat food tree for koalas.

Rainforest remnants and non-target timber species such as Casuarina (a glossy black cockatoo food species) are routinely destroyed in logging operations.

There is nothing selective about forestry operations as driving massive industrial machinery ensures that all in its path is reduced to waste.

FC and their antecedents have logged all but the most remote and inaccessible forests right across the state. There is nothing sustainable about practices which take vastly greater quantities of timber than that which can be re-grown. It is an extractive industry in the same way that coal mining is an extractive industry. And the scale of the footprint of destruction greater than that of coal mining.

To summarise: FC is not in the business of sustainable management. Nothing indicates their practices in the future will be any better. Repeat prosecutions and continued engagement of contractors convicted of physical violence and physical restraint of protestors suggests there is no likelihood that FC will change because they continue to engage said convicted contractors.

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

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The environmental value of forests can hardly be overstated. NSW, once home to thriving populations of iconic and unique Australian species, can now 'boast' of those same species as endangered, and for koalas, likely to be extinct by 2050 if not before. Gliders require about 20 trees within gliding distance of each other to survive. Pre-harvest surveys by FC routinely fail to identify den trees and they don't undertake surveys when the animals are visible. Clearly FC see no environmental value in the animals which inhabit our diverse forests. The environmental importance of old trees with hollows are critical to over 170 native species from animals to

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insects. Diverse forests are essential for life. Single species plantations which are the FC preference will never support forest life as we know it.

The NSW government should protect our forests for their significant cultural values. Forests are critical refuges for human population health. They have restorative properties similar to coasts and wilderness. I have a rather poor understanding of how Aboriginal First Nations people regard the forests. I have however seen first hand the damage wrought by a bull dozer which illegally traversed a shallow stream in Conglomerate State Forest and destroyed, forever, ancient large flat grinding stones which had the V shaped markings of millennia of tool sharpening by indigenous peoples. I have seen the heartbreak and distress this has caused Elders and young alike to whom these relics of their past were of immense importance. Doubtless this uncaring wanton destruction and abuse of irreplaceable Aboriginal artefacts is not uncommon. FC fails to supervise forestry operations undertaken by culturally ignorant contractors. The NSW Government should ensure that FC are more respectful of First Nations people.

The environmental value of forests are immense. Forests are the only recognised means of capturing and storing carbon dioxide. Carbon capture and storage by industrial processes have cost millions to construct and have proven a failure. Photosynthesis is the only means by which carbon is captured and oxygen is released. It's a no brainer. There are so many environmental values of forests to mention. Forests are a critical component of the water cycle. Without forests we will have rainfall more similar to desert environments. Water is life as they say and our ever increasing population needs more water to survive not less - water for survival, water for horticulture and farming, water for industry, water for recreation, water for environmental flows and so on. Forests are the source of good water reserves. Forests and water are a linkage to life. It has been resoundingly demonstrated that well managed forests provide a buffer to fire. The reason our sub-tropical forests are clogged with dense undergrowth is due to past logging practices and interference with natural processes. First Nations people know that these forests were once semi-open at ground level, that they were easy to walk through and didn't need burning every 2 years to 'manage' over growth of understory species. Proof of the open characterises of sub-tropical forest can be seen in the few pockets of never logged forests that remain. The reason we have horrendous wildfires is directly related to the damage that has been done by forestry operations since European settlement. To protect our future in this dry place we need forest restoration not forest destruction. The NSW government is an absolute backwater when it comes to recognising the immense value of forests. And forest values are not on the agenda of FC except in monetary terms and they are proven failures in that department as well, losing money years after years despite increased logging intensity.

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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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I have little interest in the so called demand for timber products. We are in the midst of a climate crisis and it is my view that commercial interests for timber products play a poor second fiddle to the future for life on earth. There is ample evidence that there are perfectly good alternatives for most current timber usage. Composite telegraph poles made of fibreglass and resin outlast timber, are fire resistant (and therefore will protect critical infrastructure), rot proof and termite proof. Ozkor are now making plastic pallets both light weight and heavy duty versions which outlast timber pallets. These pallets can be sterilised too for use in pharmaceutical industries and they meet standards suitable for export. Timber pallets will phase themselves out as not being cost effective over the longer term. Concrete has largely replaced timber for railways sleepers. In underground mining rock bolting, shotcrete, steel mesh and the retention of rock pillars for stabilisation are more commonly used than timber. Modern mining has all but eliminated to use of timber for reinforcement purposes. This may well be because the quality of the timber taken

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from re-growth forests in NSW was of declining quality and strength and not long enough to meet mining needs. Timber for housing too is another red herring propagated by FC, contractors and the CFMEU. House frames are not made of hardwood and steel is being increasingly used in construction. Decking can be built with perfectly good looking composite products. There should be massive, massive taxes applied to timber decking to phase it out. Retail products made of timber such as tomato stakes are of such poor quality that most consumers are prepared to pay a little more for alternatives that don't bend, break and rot. And fencing - well timber fencing is now of such poor grade that it too is phasing itself out for better options. In short the whole product argument used to retain a destructive forestry industry amounts to fraud perpetuated upon the ill-informed and unquestioning public.

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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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I have no interest in commenting on softwood plantations as I think that sector of FCs activity is well managed on a rotational basis and those plantations are not critical for biodiversity as they have no biodiversity.

Hardwood plantations managed by FC however are a disgrace. First and foremost because FC harvests the timber after 15 years and they do this by clear felling. Long gone are the days of selective logging which enabled the forest to regenerate naturally. The massive machinery destroys the soil profile in the process of harvesting, and if they do replant before the lantana becomes wild, then the subsequent trees do not grow well. Highly compacted soils do not make for good growing conditions. I have seen plantations in Conglomerate state forest that have been planted on soils twice harvested. The trees are stunted and will never produce timber of quality. One is left wondering if FC even employs silviculturists such is the degree of ignorant mismanagement. In short the future of hardwood plantations under FC management is nothing if not dire.

In terms of private landholdings for timber supply I have insufficient knowledge to comment with any authority. Suffice to say that forests are critical to human survival whether they are in state or private hands. I am opposed to all clear fell logging practices regardless of land tenure.

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#### **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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If by 'State Forests' above you mean FC then their role is one of repeated failure, to wit; damage and destruction to critical ecosystems, illegal activities, poor or no supervision of careless contractors, abject failure in undertaking pre-harvest surveys, repeated failure to consult with stakeholders, illegal harvesting of protected species, failure to identify critical habitat, wanton mechanical damage to trees bordering forestry roads, damage to waterways, failure to provide coherent corridors for animal movements, a lack of willingness to listen to and respect the needs of the community particularly First Nations community spokespeople, complete ignorance of the value of unique Gondwana vegetation, a total failure to recognise or appreciate the needs of our rare and endangered animals which will have no ability to recover once their habitat is made threadbare by logging. It is so distressing that FC are permitted by government to continue the horror practices that should not be tolerated by any civilised society.

The economic outcomes of FC's management of our forest estate are an ongoing costly loss which is borne by taxpayers. Any private enterprise with a similar balance sheet would have gone into voluntary liquidation long ago. And further, taxpayers also foot the bill for the ever increasing penalties imposed by the courts for their illegal activities.

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In terms of social outcomes that embrace diverse management of forests I would contend that FC has not even reached first base, in fact I don't believe they are even capable of contemplating such a notion. First Nations people are routinely ignored on the NSW Mid North Coast. It is inconceivable to me that senior officers in the Coffs Harbour office of FC would be capable of considering management models that diverge from take, take, take wreckage. On the NSW Mid North Coast FC operates as a law unto itself supported by the compromised EPA who dismiss almost all reports of FC breaches - without inspection I might add. Really it's nothing less than a [REDACTED]. There are no benefits.

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**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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Who wrote that nonsense sentence above? Really is there anyone in the organisation with a heartbeat of education? Notwithstanding the above it is evident from more informed scientific minds that carbon trading in the forestry sector is a fraud. It is not kosher, not legitimate and not honest to argue that this particular acreage of forest can be felled and substituted by that particular acreage of forest that will not be felled. They BOTH EXIST, how can one be substituted for another? It's an intellectual nonsense! Similarly the horror of a biodiversity market is near too much to contemplate. When will government recognise the inherent and irreplaceable values of forests and cease viewing them as tradable goods. Forests should be valued for all that they provide and as a living entity. Forests are not assets to be traded, they are not commodities with a monetary value - they are living wonders of life. Forests are our only proven method by which this planet can capture and store carbon dioxide. The existential crisis that is climate change demands that government cease and desist from felling forests and destroying the future of next generations. FC should be fully engaged in forest restoration and rehabilitation to mitigate the threats of climate change. There is ample scope to retain all the jobs presently engaged in forestry destruction, including the jobs of bureaucrats, and convert them to forest restoration and rehabilitation.

Like whaling, forestry is a dying industry and the sooner government wakes up to the fact the more likely we will be left with unique animals loved the world over but poorly appreciated by so many in this country.

I plead, be an advocate for the future, stop the carnage and let the forests live. Always were, always will be WORTH MORE STANDING.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.