

Public submission

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David Dawson – landholder – North Coast NSW

I am a sixth generation farmer on the NSW North Coast.

Topic 1 Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW

The sustainability of forestry in NSW has been steadily and exponentially eroded since the mid 1990's by Politicians accepting offers of preference votes from activist groups in return for converting the tenure of State Forest lands into (so-called) National Park.

Much of the forest estate that has been converted is high-commercial value forest, rather than high-conservation value forest; even mid-growth stands of plantations of high-value timber species have been swept up in the tenure change.

The result is a now-massive Park Estate (more than 2,000,000 hectares north of Newcastle) and a dwindling public forest of less than 400,000 hectares. Importantly, the Park Estate is now a largely un-managed 'wilderness' subject to intense and catastrophic wildfires every decade or so, and a harbour for feral pests eg pigs, and noxious weeds.

The management of the Park Estate ignores how the Australian eucalypt ecosystem evolved under 50,000 years or more of Indigenous management by regular cool-burning in mosaic patterns. **Reference "The Biggest Estate on Earth" by Professor Bill Gammage.**

The consequence of the landscape management change in the last 200 years, and the politically driven process in the last 30 years, is a forest industry that is forced onto smaller land areas - with clear implications for long-term sustainability.

Please remember that the forest industry exists because of the demand for timber products from all sectors of the economy and community - it is an indispensable industry producing materials that can only be replaced with products made from concrete, steel or plastics, or timbers imported from countries that have no regard or concern for biodiversity or conservation principles.

Any question about sustainability should really be directed to a higher level consideration of the sustainability of our community, society, economy and sovereign status without a viable domestic timber industry; as we all would have no choice but to rely on plastics, steel and concrete - with their very high carbon footprints, need for importation and non-sustainability.

Given the unwillingness of Politicians in this day and age to have and hold a conviction, to understand and uphold science, and to use it to argue against activist groups waving preference votes, it is most unlikely that there will be any reversal of all the tenure-change of the last 30 years; hence, it is essential for forest industry - and community, society and economy - sustainability that alternative sources of timber in Private Native Forests are made available in an efficient and responsible manner, without undue regulation and cost.

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

All of these values can be met on lands under State Forest tenure as well, if not better, than on lands in National Park tenure.

The NPWS struggles to manage all the land in that estate, and where it can't, that area is either ignored or gated and locked.

As well, a more-managed landscape, as in State Forests, is less susceptible to catastrophic wildfire.

There has been a collective failure at political, administrative and community levels to understand the wide and long-term negative consequences of the 'tenure-trap'.

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

Considering Australia has in excess of \$4.1 B of imported timber, this should indicate how much demand there is for timber product. Demand well outstrips supply.

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

See comments in Topic 1

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

See comments in Topic 1

Topic 6. Opportunities to realise carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity benefits, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks, including the greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risk to forests

See comments in Topic 1