

DORIN SUCIU

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

Logging in its current form in NSW is not sustainable. Speaking from experience in rainforest areas eg Dorrigo Plateau, steep gullies make the harvesting and transport of mature trees incredibly destructive and expensive to carry out. Logging tracks cause erosion, spread weeds, destroy habitat, muddy the creeks and open areas of high ecological value to regular use by recreational 4WDS which add to further degradation of habitat. Destroying the protective forest canopy also promotes bush fire risk because soil dries out and becomes more susceptible to fire. Logging also reduces habitat of threatened species (eg koalas, greater gliders) forcing them into areas where they are more vulnerable to injury and death from car strike and dog attack.

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

Biodiversity is the bedrock of our existence as a species. It is essential to preserve these ecologically rich areas which have already been subjected to significant environmental losses due to the development of commercial interests since colonisation. The NSW Government Department of Environment and Heritage reports that "almost 1000 animal and plant species are at risk of extinction in NSW". Many of these species are found in areas which are being logged. 150 threatened species are directly impacted by deforestation including various wattle, boronia, and hakea plant species; various parrot and cockatoo species; various marsupial mammal species including koalas, potoroos, bandicoot and quoll species; frog species.

The cultural value of our forests for both indigenous and non-indigenous people lies in the significant role they play in providing connection to nature and country. This means our forests need to remain intact and capable of sustaining the rich biodiversity that characterises them. One of the challenges today is that people have "lost" their connection to nature along with their understanding of their "place" in it and alongside the bigger scheme of things. When governments preserve our natural assets it sends a message to all people that nature is valued at the highest levels of organisation. It sends the message that nature is important and worth protecting, because it is nature that ultimately sustains all of us.

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

We all need timber products and the industries which work with timber or use it to sustain manufacturing sectors such as housing and construction. However, around 40% of what is logged in a native forest ends up as sawn timber with the remaining 60% left on the forest floor. The 40% goes into sawn timber products, paper pulp, paper products, pallets and sawn wood. A large percentage ends up as waste (in addition to what's left in the forest originally) in manufacturing (including sawdust and off-cuts and waste).

"As a cabinet-maker/boat builder I know from experience that 25% - 30% of cabinet timbers after purchase will be waste. I have been working in the industry for 45 years. There is so much wastage".

Logging difficult to access terrain is extremely expensive and destructive. Plantations are far more efficient because of access, design and they are purpose grown for the sole reason of providing timber for housing, construction, mining, transport and retail. It is widely reported that timber from plantations provide most of our sawn timber - there is no need to decimate native forests to maintain these industries.

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

Plantation timbers are providing the bulk of timber across industries. [REDACTED] an employee at [REDACTED] reports

"we use native plantation hoop pine plywood in the boats we build including in our cruising yachts and now the popular trailer-sailor Cygnet 20 model. All the bulkheads, cabinetry and head and side liners are made from plantation hoop pine ply from Queensland".

Farmers occupying degraded agricultural land could be subsidised to produce a viable and sustainable industry meaning there would be no need to log native forests. Invest the money to grow trees for future harvests and long-term gain, rather than the short-term profit delivered from native forest logging - the latter which is minimal and unsustainable.

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

State Forests have the potential and capacity to act as powerful mechanisms for maximising biodiversity and maintaining the natural systems which all species including humans rely on. State Forests provide avenues for Indigenous land management and tourism. State Forests can be integral to re-connecting us to our natural environment through recreation, exploration and in developing our appreciation and respect for the natural world. Our State Forests can help us expand our knowledge of natural systems and provide an incredible resource from which to advance our understanding of complex biological relationships. They are places to be enjoyed, explored, studied, appreciated and respected. They shouldn't be seen as resources to be exploited, especially when more suitable and economically viable alternatives exist.

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

By retaining native forests and expanding managed plantations in regional areas the forest industry reduces its carbon footprint and at the same time promotes and secures biodiversity while mitigating risk from climate change.

Currently, logging practises rely on the false assumption that by logging a big tree many smaller trees will replace it when in fact the older tree with its massive size and surface area absorbs far more carbon than numerous small trees. It is better to retain the forests we already have and value add to an important industry by focusing on the huge potential of plantation timbers.