

ELLIE ROBERTSON

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

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This is a no-brainer. Logging native forests removes the older trees, getting rid of hollows and other habitat for forest wildlife, such as the Koala and the Great Glider. Current levels of logging are not sustainable and result in the removal of protections for key habitat. This must stop now. Logging of native forests reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees.

174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests, logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests.

Continued logging will contribute greatly to the extinction of forest dependent wildlife. The 2019/20 fires have made this situation much more urgent and serious.

Estimations by the Forestry Corporation of the amount of harvestable timber are consistently over estimated.

The yield from public native forests has declined by 40% since 2010.

Protections for mature trees were removed in 2018 and logging was intensified to try and get more wood from native forests.

Native forest logging increases fire threat and intensity, erosion and water way pollution, and the penetration of weeds and other invasive species.

Native forest logging reduces the function and health of waterways, including streams and rivers.

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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 are vital refuges for many threatened species that rely on mature, intact forests. 150 threatened species in NSW are already directly impacted by logging native forests.

There are 269 nationally listed threatened species in NSW and the landscape scale significance of native forests means that native forest logging compromises many ecosystems and habitats throughout NSW.

Mature and unlogged native forests are critical for pollinators and play a key role in pollination across the landscape, both inside and outside of forests.

Healthy and unlogged forests are critical to the whole environment and both First Nations and non-First Nations culture and identity.

Native forests provide recreation and improved health outcomes to locals and visitors alike and are a source of community pride and connection to place.

Native forests in NSW hold significant cultural and spiritual value for First Nations people. First Nations people and communities have ongoing connection to native forests and forest landscapes are an integral part of cultural practice and knowledge.

In Summary

Forests provide important services for the environment and regional communities, such as:

- o Water quality and flow regulation, important for water quality, fishing and tourism.
- o Recreational values for locals and visitors.

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- o Cultural and spiritual significance, especially for indigenous communities.
  - o Habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity and ecosystem health.

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

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There is no longer any need to log public native forests to build houses. Plantations can supply our high quality and composite timber products. Shifting to plantation timber reduces pressure on native forests, supporting sustainable industry practices.

Logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023. Native forest logging contributes only 2.4 million of the total 25 million cubic metres for that year.

Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported. Hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips. Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses identified in this section.

Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods. This is disgraceful. The market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests is just one example.

### **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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Hardwood and softwood plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production. Investment in hardwood plantations on already cleared land would supply timber products into the future.

Shifting to higher-value plantations can better meet timber needs. A higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations should be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips

Ending public forest subsidies would boost sustainable timber production on private lands. Subsidising the logging of public native forests by the Forestry Corporation is non-competitive, misleading and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry.

High-end and luxury native hardwood products should only be selectively harvested on private land and under strict conditions.

### **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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The native forest hardwood division of the Forestry Corporation operates at a loss that runs into tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of the NSW public. It also additionally receives tens of millions of dollars in regular equity injections

Protecting and restoring State Forests will increase the economic value through tourism, carbon storage, job creation and recreational opportunities. The Forestry Corporation is currently financially unsustainable, relying on government support and yielding less timber compared to managed plantations.

Native forests that are not logged have real and tangible benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW. Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging.

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Native state forests cover an area of 2 million hectares in NSW and impact on a diverse set of living conditions for many towns, from water quality in reservoirs, to greater tourism industry opportunities, and carbon storage and abatement. Healthy native forests provide essential water resources.

Diverse forest management, particularly Aboriginal models, can enhance the cultural and social value of forests. First Nations Ranger Programs have been hugely successful at managing the recovery and health of native forests. Programs like the Githabul Rangers have shown how First Nations knowledge and management can restore the natural and critical function of forests in the landscape.

The people of NSW should not be paying millions of dollars to destroy the biodiversity of our own state and critical habitat for threatened species.

### **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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Logging in native forests releases large amounts of carbon, contributing to climate change. Stopping logging allows forests to recover, helping them store more carbon and support climate goals.

Native forest logging in NSW is estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year. Ending native forest logging would be the equivalent to removing 840 thousand cars from the roads per year. Logging in a native forest reduces the amount of stored carbon by more than half of the original value.

Healthy forests are essential for reducing the impacts of climate change like wildfires and drought. By stopping logging, forests can play a large role in mitigating climate risks and supporting opportunities in carbon markets.

Climate change is driving increased risks for forest health and continued logging in native forests is exacerbating that risk.

Forests that have not been logged are more resilient to the changing climate and catastrophic fires that are occurring as a consequence.

Ending native forest logging will allow previously logged forests to regain lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our emissions targets.