

Public submission

HUGH MILNER

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Submission to the Independent Forestry Panel

Please bring an end to the logging of native forests in New South Wales as soon as possible

I am extremely concerned at the rate of loss of Australia's unique wildlife. The research literature states that the rate of loss far exceeds "the global average for mammals, are predicted to escalate across all taxa, and ecosystems are collapsing". (Loss of terrestrial biodiversity in Australia: Magnitude, causation, and response, Legge, S, et al. 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.adg7870>) Of particular concern for native forest logging is the loss of habitat for the greater glider and for koalas. The CSIRO found that current environmental legislation was failing to protect habitat and that after 2016 when the greater glider was listed as vulnerable to extinction under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, the destruction of its habitat in NSW increased. (Is Australia's environmental legislation protecting threatened species? A case study of the national listing of the greater glider. Ashman, KR. Et al 2021. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6943-6318>)

It is not just these iconic animals that need protection. Many other species of birds, animals, insects, etc. rely on native forests. Whole ecosystems need to be maintained and protected.

But retaining quality forests is not only necessary as habitat for our heritage animals, it is essential for meeting climate change targets, and for maintaining the health of water resource systems and managing the impact of increasing flooding. Removing mature trees reduces biomass and carbon storage. Intact forest systems deliver benefits to the hydrology of watersheds and stabilize rivers and streams, delivering quality water resources. Mature forests are more resilient to the many and growing impacts of climate change, such as extreme rain, drought, heatwaves, and fire.

We have an obligation to retain and protect native forests because of their value for Aboriginal people and their culture. We should use their knowledge and customs to improve the management of native forests. Mature native forests are important assets for the community, providing recreation and improved health outcomes to locals and visitors. My own experience in walking and camping in forests with my family and friends has demonstrated this to me.

Thank you.

Hugh Milner, BE. Grad Dip (Eng) UNSW
Water resources and environmental consultant