

Public submission

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SUBMISSION TO INDEPENDENT FORESTRY PANEL
INDEPENDENT PLANNING COMMISSION

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I have been “fighting” for trees since I was 18yrs old and signed a petition against the flooding/damming of Lake Manapouri in New Zealand for hydro-electricity production. Ancient forests were drowned.

I have lived on the Mid North Coast for 37 years, first on properties; where I got to look at forests from Kempsey to Dorrigo on the back of a 4km/hour horse; then in the village of [REDACTED].

I have been involved (at varying degrees of intensity) with trying to protect Forests since 1981.

I completed a B. Env. Science in 2006 that I started in 1997, partly to learn the science that underpinned my instinctive desire to protect and respect the age and beauty of Old Growth Forests. I learnt a lot!!

Native Forest Logging has to stop. It is not sustainable. The products are getting smaller and smaller. There are hardly any saw logs cut down these days it is all headed for pulp and woodchips. The time between cuts is getting shorter and shorter. There seems to be little research conducted by Forestry into changed growth patterns in a changed climate.

Trees kept in the ground do more to mitigate the effects of climate change than any economic/capitalist “carbon capture schemes”.

The remaining large hollow-bearing trees in a logged forest become vulnerable to wind topple and fire damage. You cannot keep den trees and then cut down a lot of the food source and call that sound environmental management.

The animals that use these trees as homes and food sources become scarcer.

Forestry Corp NSW is presently destroying critical Habitat of the Southern Greater Glider in my “home” forest: Bulga Forest NSW. Within the proposed logging area a group of citizen scientists have found 10 times more Glider Den trees than Forestry and their paid workers. These finds were all accepted onto the Bionet mapping process.

We have also found more Giant trees than Forestry.

Citizen scientists all over NSW have done more species survey work than Forestry.

Forestry does not want to find anything

This little snapshot of my home forest is being repeated all over the state.

Plantations are the way to go, if they are managed properly. None of the plantations in Bulga Forest would be considered a “plantation” in most peoples eyes; a few jiffy pots were planted in the 60s and then these compartments were left to grow – if you look for the species planted there are few or none and the compartments are largely regenerated native forest. The few public/private plantations established in the 90s have not been successful because there has been no thinning because there has been no market for the thinnings. You cannot have a good forest that is solely managed on economic principles.

Forestry Corporation NSW is subsidised by the NSW taxpayer to the tune of \$249 million in 2019-2020 – and still managed to make a loss of \$28million - it costs the taxpayer approx \$1300 to log each hectare

It is obviously not economical. It is continued for political reasons and because successive governments have been cowards.

There are regular breaches, court cases (which in some instances take years to be prosecuted; whilst the criminals continue to cut down a tree every minute). I believe that Forestry is the only Govt Department that pays the fines of the contractors who do the breaching.

The EPA cannot do anything to Forestry that compromises the Wood Supply : therefore they are really toothless tigers: Forestry has boasted that their continuing court cases are proof that the “policing” system works – it is ethically bereft.

From the 6 topic subjects that this Panel has chosen to highlight it is obvious that you can only deal in tangibles.

However after countless years watching real economic evidence and real environmental evidence being ignored or watered down so much as to be meaningless; I think there has to be a recognition of the fact that ideology is the only thing permitting the logging of our Forests to continue. And it is an ideology that is increasingly at odds with public opinion.

They have no social licence to continue illogically destroying our forests and everything that has evolved in forests over the last 360 million years. Humans are a mere eyelid’s blink in comparison.

One of the many things I learnt whilst doing my degree is that Forests are not just trees: they are everything that has evolved to live on/in the plants, all the fungi, animals, micro flora and fauna in the soil...everything. We evolved in trees. They offer much to human society in terms of water quality and quantity, they hold the soil together, they can create rain, they are a source of food and medicine and they absorb Carbon.

We need to be serious about finding ways of transitioning the majority of forestry jobs into the regeneration and forest (non-logging) management as we hurtle towards a hotter climate.

Thank you for considering my submission.

It’s hard to look your grandchildren in the eye sometimes.

Jane Watson