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

Forestry operations in New South Wales cannot be considered sustainable. It takes hundreds of years for forest to recover after forestry operations, but long before this forestry is back knocking down more trees. In the meantime, species of plants and animals are destroyed. It is very easy to see the difference between forest that has been previously logged and that which has been left intact. Leaving some trees, taking large trees and destroying the structure of the forest at the same time, possibly replanting some saplings which may or may not survive, destroying delicately balanced ecosystems in a biodiversity crisis and refusing to acknowledge that this destructive practice cannot continue indefinitely is not sustainable.

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

Forestry operations in NSW are sustained destruction, propped up by tax-payer funds (around \$20 M in 22/23 and \$15 M last year) but are not sustainable. We lost so much of our native forest in the devastating Black Summer fires. Not to mention countless plants and animals. What is sustainable about destroying what is left? A few species will have a specific 'habitat tree' protected, if forestry documents that it is a habitat tree, which relies on them 1) searching for endangered species at the correct time of day/night 2) finding and documenting them and 3) actually respecting that. Forestry NSW has already been fined for not carrying out and respecting these requirements.

And what of species that are not yet endangered but are having their habitat destroyed? We are in a biodiversity crisis! Forestry destroys habitat and kills native animals. How can this be called sustainable?

So many species need hollows - multiple hollows - to survive. Even if an endangered animal is, miraculously, sighted emerging from a hollow and this happens to be documented, what about its other hollows that it requires to survive? There is no requirement to protect these. They are essential for the life of endangered species such as the Greater Glider. Trees need to be 100+ years old to form hollows. Where are the next generation of hollow-bearing trees in logged forest? I regularly walk in logged forest. I can't see them.

Logging is destroying food and habitat trees of so many species of birds and animals. Koalas, south-eastern glossy black cockatoos, gang-gangs, powerful owls, just to mention a few.

Once our forests and our plants, animals and the cultural heritage of First Nations Peoples are destroyed, they are gone forever. This is not sustainable. There are alternatives. Such as a just transition to 100% plantation timber.

Australia has one of the highest mammal extinction rates in the world and the highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions of all OECD member countries. We are also the only developed nation identified as a deforestation hotspot. Native forestry is definitely not sustainable.

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

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We undeniably require timber products for housing, construction and other purposes. The fact is that most of this timber is not sourced from native forests and native forest timber is used primarily for other purposes. Here in the Eurobodalla, most of our precious native forest is pulped and used for low value product such as paper and cardboard. For which there are alternatives. For construction, there is no reason why plantation timber cannot be used. The majority of building timber comes from plantations, which many other states and countries have transitioned to. South Australia and the ACT have been protecting their native forests for many years. Western Australia and Victoria officially ended logging this year. New Zealand ended native forest logging in 2002. They have recognised that native forestry is not sustainable.

In NSW most of our plantations are softwood, but hardwood plantations exist profitably in other states such as Western Australia. It is entirely possible to transition to plantation timber without destroying our irreplaceable native forests.

### **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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New South Wales needs to concentrate its efforts in the timber industry on transitioning to 100% plantation timber. Native forest is a finite resource and we cannot afford to destroy it and continue this loss-making process. Saying that it is too difficult to transition to hardwood plantations is disingenuous. We are destroying our forest at such a rate that between this and our land clearing crisis we are destroying our own future.

### **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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State forests are a public resource not the private property of Forestry Corporation. Other economic and social outcomes are frequently ignored, while Forestry Corporation is seemingly allowed to do as it pleases with public forests while being propped up with tax-payer money. For example, here on the south coast a great deal of money has been spent making world class mountain biking tracks through the forest. However, Forestry Corporation is able to log the same area, destroying the amenity of the area, destroying tracks that have been made and making it unlikely that tourists will want to be here, mountain biking through a moonscape. It is very hard for tourism operators to make a living trying to attract tourists to an area where endangered species are being destroyed and the beautiful forest has been torn up and destroyed.

### **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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There is ample evidence that forestry increases bushfire risk. This is an incredibly serious and terrifying outcome. 60% of logged trees is left on the ground (the crown) providing fuel for future and hotter bush fires. Our old-growth trees reduce bushfire risk as they burn less readily than the small-bore trees, increased weeds and undergrowth promoted by logging.

Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage system - the only proven one. Why should we cut them down and attempt to build expensive artificial CCS systems when there is no evidence that these work? This makes no sense in a climate crisis. Cutting down our forests contributes to the climate crisis, therefore both directly and indirectly increases our bushfire risk.