

# Public submission

JOHN BRETNALL

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**Organisation:** *N/A*

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**Location:** *New South Wales*

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *Attached overleaf*

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13<sup>th</sup> October 2024

The Chairperson  
The Independent Forestry Panel

Dear Sir,

**SUBMISSION TO THE INDEPENDENT FORESTRY PANEL**

Please find attached my personal submission in relation to the consultation on a Forestry Industry Action Plan.

I am a Minister of the Uniting Church in Australia. I am a member of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change and the Uniting Eco Group and a supporter of the Uniting Climate Action Network.

I have been involved in climate advocacy for twelve years, having become involved in 2012.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to add my voice to those calling for a rapid end to native forest logging.

Yours sincerely

JOHN BRETNALL (REV)

## Submission to the Independent Forestry Panel

By Rev John Brentnall

13<sup>th</sup> October 2024

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

Logging in native forests is not sustainable. Logging native forests removes the older trees, removing hollows and other habitat for forest wildlife, such as the Koala and the Great Glider. Current levels of logging result in the removal of protections for key habitat and continued logging will likely contribute greatly to the extinction of forest dependent wildlife. The 2019/20 fires have made this situation much more urgent and serious.

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

Forests are vital refuges for many threatened species that rely on mature, intact forests. Forests provide important services for the environment and regional communities, such as water quality and flow regulation, important for water quality, fishing and tourism. Forests have important recreational value for locals and visitors and have cultural and spiritual significance for indigenous communities. Forest provide habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity and ecosystem health.

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

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

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

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 and shifting to higher-value plantations would better meet timber needs. Ending public forest subsidies would boost sustainable timber production on private lands.

### **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**

Healthy native forests provide essential water resources. Protecting and restoring State Forests will increase their 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. Diverse forest management, particularly Aboriginal models, would enhance the cultural and social value of forests.

### **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**

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