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

The selective logging within the multiple use forest concept is highly regulated and that has created a good balance of economic and environmental outcomes. Foresters are the true conservationists. Hardwood plantations will only ever be a supplementary resource to native forests harvesting.

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

Current forest selective logging management protects sites of Aboriginal significance, critical habitats and pristine locations. It emulates the traditional land management techniques and it has enhanced the existence of native flora and fauna. I was a member of the Pine Creek State Forest Koala Management Advisory Committee that was established in 1996. Forest operations commenced here in the late 1980s. We identified a koala population of over 400 animals but this population has greatly diminished since this forest became a National Park. Indications from the literature (CSIRO 1997: Melzer and Houston 1997) are that koalas prefer open forest patches over more closed forests areas. A key indicator of koala activity was the presence in uneven aged forests. (Smith and Andrews 1997: Lunney et al 1996 and White 1994). Similarly the once thriving koala populations within what were the Mebbin and Wiangaree State Forests have also apparently disappeared.

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

A reduction in native forestry harvesting would be detrimental to the availability of durable hardwood timbers used in marine piles, utility poles and high quality building products. Plantation timbers do not have these unique and required characteristics, This resource is particularly available in the NSW North Coast.

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

Plantation establishment should be encouraged, where there is suitable available land, to supplement native forest products but they cannot be a full replacement. The latter part of my working life was with the Department of Primary Industry as the Private Native Forest Project Officer. We held field days for farmers throughout NSW educating and assisting landholders in managing their forests. Another important source of resource that is severely impacted by regulation and, in some areas, unnecessary dual consent requirement.

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

Foresters should be allowed to practice their craft as foresters without the increasing incumbent bureaucratic red tape. History clearly shows that the multiple use forestry management concept can and has resulted in achieving all of the above stated outcomes.

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

NSW forest management is ecological sustainable and it also greatly contributes to biodiversity enhancement and carbon sequestration. A component of this management is regular and controlled hazard reduction; critical in minimising catastrophic bushfires. However, again in exercising this necessary task, foresters are being hampered by bureaucrats as to when and how!