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

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NSW native forests include Old growth and Regrowth forests. Most were logged in the past, with little or no consideration of the vital role that forests play in providing habitat and supporting biodiversity. The value of the harvested timber and its accessibility were the main considerations. Early timber harvesting supplied high value and enduring needs, including the construction of dwellings, railways, bridges, wharves and in mining. Because timber was harvested selectively, and because the technology of harvesting, milling and transportation was relatively primitive, the scale of harvesting was relatively small, as was the environmental impact.

Under these conditions, the industry supplied

However, in 2024 the situation is very different.

As a result of technological developments, the timber industry is now highly mechanised and can process large quantities of timber at low cost. This has opened up new markets for forest other products, but much is now low value materials such as wood chips for paper and cardboard and inferior grade construction products. These inevitably have a much shorter useful life, after which they decompose and release carbon dioxide which contributes to global warming.

Unlike earlier timber harvesting, current practices harvesting timber from old growth and regrowth native forests are environmentally destructive, they are happening on a much larger scale, and the majority of product is low value, short life span, and contributes significantly to global warming.

With the exception on harvesting from plantations, this is an industry whose activities can no longer be justified.

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

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The world that humans have come to dominate in recent centuries thrives on diversity and the inter-connectedness of plants, animals in the landscape.

Harvesting of resources on land and in the oceans is impacting the delicate balance between plants, animals and humans. This has a negative effect on biodiversity and can ultimately affect our food supply.

In Australia, native forests provide habitat for many species that contribute to biodiversity.

Science continues to find new compounds and chemicals produced by plants and animals in forest environments. Some of these have added greatly to human well-being and our ability to treat illness and disease. Much of this work is in its infancy, so native forests must be protected to enable this work to continue.

In addition, the aesthetic value of a healthy forest and the plants and animals that it supports, cannot be measured in monetary value, but must not be undervalued in its contribution to human well-being.

Because of this, timber harvesting must be restricted to a plantation programme, and native forests must be left untouched to recover fully from previous logging.

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Future generations will appreciate this far more than global warming caused by the decomposition of low value forest products like paper and cardboard.

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

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Most timber construction can now be met with plantation products. These can be treated to ensure a long useful life. In addition they are easier to work with and transport, and are stable in construction situations.

There is no need to harvest from native forests, particularly since they are of greater value to present and future generations if left to recover, thrive and support biodiversity.

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**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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No submission under this heading.

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**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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I believe that State Forests have a responsibility to present and future generations to look far beyond short term financial returns to an unsustainable industry. It has been shown repeatedly that when responsible Authorities fail to recognise changing community values and expectations, and fail to act appropriately,

greatly increased costs to remediate can be incurred. Where extinctions happen as a result of human greed or indifference, the loss may seem small and insignificant, but it is a loss forever. As I see it, State Forests is subject to intense lobbying from a powerful group of individuals with vested interests focussed on short term financial gain. Opposing this approach, are people who recognise that native forests have much to offer to everyone, now and into the future. The benefits are hard to put a value on, but they are very real and their importance will continue to grow.

State Forests needs to resist pressure from vested interests and prioritise other values that native forests can offer.

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**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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With the effects of climate ever more apparent, serious and urgent, all Governments must legislate and act to reduce greenhouse gas (carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses) emissions. Healthy forests continually remove greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere and store them safely.

However, timber harvesting, particularly clear felled forests, no longer absorb and sequester carbon dioxide. Greenhouse gasses are released to the atmosphere and the rate of this release greatly increases if harvested timber is processed into disposable products.

Authorities responsible for the ways forests are managed need to recognise this fact, and respond accordingly.