

Public submission

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Submission to Independent Forestry Panel

I am a retired university manager, and live on the Far South Coast of New South Wales, amid many state forests, in a community that has long been involved in logging native forests. I am not a member of any environmental group.

I urge the panel to recommend that native forest logging in New South Wales be discontinued as soon as possible, for the following reasons. (My understanding of these factors is based on coverage of forestry matters by the ABC news service, which I trust as a source of reliable information.)

Native forest logging is destroying the little remaining habitat of endangered species such as koalas, greater gliders, orange-bellied parrots, regent honeyeaters and swift parrots.

State forestry corporation logging staff, and the corporation's leadership, have demonstrated that they cannot be trusted to follow requirements to minimise the environmental harm of logging. They have a long record now of breaches and fines. I know the sort of people who work in forestry, and they would take pride in disregarding such requirements. I do not believe the bland corporate reassurances of the forestry corporation – their record speaks for them.

Bushfire scientists tell us that logged forests are more prone to severe bushfires, at a time when climate change is raising bushfire risks.

We need mature native trees to sequester carbon to help reduce carbon in the atmosphere: this is a matter of survival for Australia.

The NSW native forest logging industry is subsidised – that is, it isn't financially viable – and it employs relatively few people, so is not vital to the state's economy either. It seems only to be kept alive because discontinuing it would change election results in some electorates. Victoria and Western Australia, however, have shown that state governments can end native logging without losing office.

I understand that our timber needs can be met by plantation timber, which is more financially viable than native forest logging.

Turning our state forests into parks that are never logged will regenerate biodiversity, sequester carbon and afford opportunities for eco-tourism. It will be consistent with what I understand to be the values of traditional custodians of the various country on which these forests stand: the values of caring for country rather than trashing it.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Dr Kai Jensen

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