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

Native forest logging in NSW is neither environmentally nor financially sustainable. Logging targets mature trees and forest which serve as a vital habitat for countless endemic species, including endangered species like the greater glider, iconic koala and migratory swift parrot. Destruction of these mature, slow growing ecosystems creates a biological hole in which native species and biodiversity as a whole is unable to thrive. The academic community has forecast likely extinction as the outcome for species such as the greater glider and koala who depend on mature eucalyptus forest for their habitat.

The recent bushfires of 2019/20 have compromised the health and resiliency of these forest ecosystems which are continuing to be subject to logging despite the EPA's recommendation of a reduction or moratorium while sufficient analysis and long term planning can be put into effect. Not only this, but our native forest has been proven to be at a significantly higher risk to bushfire in the ~70 years after a stand has been logged. Placing forest recovery, wildlife, biodiversity, infrastructure and lives at continually increased risk.

Additionally, Forestry Corporation NSW (FCNSW), a state owned enterprise has failed to post a profit for multiple years running, turning a loss of over \$20 million tax paid dollars in 2021. This is despite various environmental allowances afforded by the industry which are not granted to any other extractive resource based industry.

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

Forests provide vital refuges for many threatened species that rely on mature, intact forests. As development for housing, industry and agriculture continues to expand, these mature intact forests are becoming put under ever increased pressure through land clearing, genetic isolation and fragmentation.

Additionally, forests provide important services for the environment and regional communities, such as:

- Water quality and flow regulation, important for water quality, flood protection, recreational and industrial fishing and tourism.
- Recreational values for locals and visitors.
- Cultural and spiritual significance, especially for indigenous communities.
- Habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity and ecosystem health.

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

Plantations are now providing the vast majority of our forestry jobs and materials. Native forest logging has been proven to be an industry that is failing from both environmental and financial considerations in NSW. Additionally, the majority of native forest hardwood logs are not destined to become durable and beautiful building materials, but instead become low grade products such as mulch and pulp.

The plantation industry has the resources and capacity to meet the demand for timber products. Shifting to plantation timber harvest has the opportunity to reclaim degraded agricultural land for forest and create truly sustainable timber yield. Unlike the current model which FCNSW claims to be sustainable, but in truth continues to propagate forest degradation each year.

Topic 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 over 90% of Australia's log production. Investment in hardwood plantations on previously cleared land would help to supply timber products into the future. Ending public forest subsidies would also allow for resources to be allocated to a revitalised timber industry, ensuring a just transition for the timber industry out of native forest logging.

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

Healthy native forests provide essential water resources and practically immeasurable ecosystem services. Protecting and restoring State Forests will increase the economic value through tourism, carbon storage, job creation and recreational opportunities. It is also a positive step towards the Australian Government meeting its legislated greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Diverse forest management, particularly Aboriginal models, can enhance the cultural and social value of forests, including protecting our natural and cultural heritage for future generations in perpetuity.

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

The Australian Government has legislated greenhouse gas reduction targets. Researchers from ANU estimate that the reduction needed to meet these goals is roughly equal to the annual industry emissions currently produced by the native forest logging industry. It is also known that mature trees sequester significantly more carbon than young trees, and that most of the carbon a tree captures is done in the second half of its 250+ year life. If we want to utilise our natural resources as best as possible as we work to transition to a carbon neutral and negative economy, harvesting forest on a less than 100 year cycle is simply not efficient or sustainable.

I also previously mentioned the increased fire risk for forests in the ~70 years post logging, this also applies to drought and flood mitigation as well as localised temperature regulation. Walking from an open field into a forest on a hot day is a great way to experience this phenomenon for oneself.