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

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The Native forestry logging industry is not sustainable either in the economic or the ecological sense.

Note as defined by the 1987 Brutland Report Sustainable Development is 'the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

And Unsustainability defined as - 'State or condition that threatens the long-run (environmental, social, and economic) development.'

Hence the continuation of Native Forestry in NSW is as viewed by our Landcare group the opposite of sustainable practices in that a) it is continuing to dramatically impact of the habitat of the threatened Yellow-bellied Glider; the Greater Glider and the vulnerable Koala & Glossy Black Cockatoo and many other threatened mammals and birds. 150 threatened species in NSW are directly impacted by logging native forests.

The process that the continuation of native forest logging is impacting these species is by reducing the hollow bearing trees (note 174 species rely on tree hollows for dens and nests) and the changes in the composition of the forests.

The loss of the coupes within the current forests is destroying the fauna corridors and the connectivity of the forests.

b) The newer current logging practices use heavier machinery than before and hence after logging the forests are then more flammable (per lead researcher Professor David Lindenmayer, from ANU, said. 'We've understood for a long time now that logging can make bushfires worse.' One of these processes is the drying out of the forest by loss of canopy cover, penetration of weeds after logging practices. It would be fair to compare the current industrial logging practices as the equivalent of industrialised extractive mining of timber resources from our state forests

c) The other issue is the loss of productive timber now that fires are more frequent 'the rapid increase in the frequency of high-severity wildfire in parts of south-eastern Australia (Lindenmayer et al. 2023a) clearly indicates that the probability of forests remaining unburnt for long enough to produce a viable crop of timber' This is also evidenced by the decline in yield from public forests having reduced by 40% since 2010.

d) Severe impact on the native forests by industrial style current logging practices increased soil compaction, reduces the ability of the native forests to provide water to towns.

e) The use of heavy machinery, creation of logging roads damages the very important soil biodiversity that is below the surface of the existing native forests. 'The maintenance of soil biodiversity is essential to both the environment and to agricultural industries' NSW dept of Environment and Heritage. These living organisms are vital to provide essential cycling of nutrients, improve permeability of water to the soil, reduces risk of erosion, suppresses pests, parasites and disease, aids in the capture of carbon

Note in regards to the confirm the current poor NSW forestry practices the former NSW Minister Bob Debus recently said 'As a publicly owned body, the Forestry Corporation should be

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attempting to minimise environmental damage during logging operations. Instead, they appear to be deliberately targeting the areas of highest conservation value within the state forest estate for destruction,

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

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The NSW existing state forests cultural values are being heavily impacted by the continuation of heavy logging and therefore reducing the substantial cultural heritage values for First Nations peoples (Gott 2005).

We should be utilising our first nations people expertise by providing meaningful employment in conservation & Tourism roles in future national parks that can be created when the Native Forestry stops.

The proposed Great Koala National Park (GKNP) that is a current commitment by the NSW Government (NSW Dept of Environment & Heritage) was to be 176,000 Ha. However apart from vast areas of it being burnt in the NSW 2019 wildfires. The current logging regime is 4 times greater within the GKNP state native forest areas (1 Ha being actively logged per 24 Ha within the GKNP = 4.2%) compared to areas (1 Ha being actively logged per 104 Ha within the GKNP , less than 1%). This 4 times greater logging rate within the GKNP is devastating to the remaining Koala population in NSW. Note that within the GKNP area there are 20% of the remaining NSW Koala population just in the Coffs Harbour Area. Our Landcare Group demands that the continued logging within the GKNP be halted immediately.

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

The evidence is damning:

- a) Native forest logging is just 9% of the total log production in Australia) native forest logging provides just 2.4 million cubic metres to the total 25 Million cubic metres in 2023.
- b) 50% of the logs taken in native forests are turned into wood chips & exported.

The housing industry primarily uses softwoods from plantations (the vast majority of sawn timber (90%) comes from plantations (ABARES 2021, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry 2023)

- c) As an example, market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests.
- d) Hence a transition to plantation only timber resource as New Zealand did 20 years ago

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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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- a) Plantations provide currently 91% of Australia's log production, hence whilst native forest logging is ceased in NSW, plantation areas in suitable areas should increase.
- b) The subsidies provided by the NSW government to the existing State forestry logging operations is a distortion of the market. If these grants are ceased it will allow the softwood plantation industry to become more profitable.

#### **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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- a) If the existing State Forestry reserves have logging cease tomorrow, they will provide a great economic and highly valuable environmental and socially important resource to the people of NSW. By ensuring the rehabilitation of the existing native forest estate is an opportunity to increase the use of First Nation Ranger programs to manage the recovery of these forests. This may include where appropriate limited cool burning practices where suitable to manage the forests.
- b) Currently the government of NSW is supporting the FCNSW's native hardwood division as a recent report noted in 2023 in 2019/20 financial year the state-owned logging division received \$246.9M worth of grants when at the same period the hardwood division which was responsible for the logging in NSW forests made a \$28.2M loss over that period. Clearly that is economically unsustainable.
- c) It is outrageous that the NSW taxpayers are subsidising the wanton destruction on the habitat that is so vital to maintain the biodiversity of NSW. Conversely if the state-owned forest areas are preserved and restored and rehabilitated, they will provide increased tourist opportunities, increased source of water reserves for NSW in the perilous future that includes dangerous change to our climate.

#### **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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- a) Ending Native Forest Logging in NSW will also greatly benefit the fight to limit the effects of Climate Change, hence if logging stops next year a comparison would be to remove 840 thousand cars from the road for every year, that is a massive benefit.
- b) As per Dr Jennifer Sanger stated in respect to Victoria's Forest Carbon Report stated 'Protecting forests is a low-cost, effective, and immediate way to achieve both emissions reduction and to absorb carbon from the atmosphere. It is a sensible step and a necessary one if the government is serious about climate action.'