

LINDA SFORD

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**Organisation:** N/A

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**Location:** New South Wales

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

Yield estimates from state forests have been overstated by Forestry Corporation and have been declining drastically in the last decade with the 2019/20 fires contributing to a greater loss of resources. Native forest logging is not sustainable removing old growth trees, increasing fire intensity, erosion, weeds and pollution of our waterways. It makes more sense to protect our native forests for all the reasons detailed below and increase hardwood and softwood plantations.

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

Our forests are vital for generating rainfall, cooling and cleaning the air, controlling runoff to rivers and streams and limiting soil erosion. They absorb carbon dioxide and are homes to our native animals, birds and reptiles. They are important to our health and attract tourists to our area, generating income for the community. There are significant cultural places within these forests for our local indigenous Gumbaynggirr people. We live in a small village on the Mid North Coast of NSW surrounded by State Forests. Our community and tourists regularly use these areas for a range of recreational activities and we appreciate the diverse estuarine bird and animal life.

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

Less than 10% of Australia's log production in the previous year came from native hardwoods half of which was exported as woodchips. Native forest logs will no longer be needed to build houses and other construction projects if greater use of existing plantations is made to meet the demand for sawn timber and composite timber products.

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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**

Over 90% of Australia's log production is being met by hardwood and softwood plantations. Instead of subsidising public forest harvesting and exporting as woodchips more saw and veneer logs should be obtained from plantations.

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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**

Our public forests are of greater economic benefit to our communities than subsidising an industry making huge losses that are ultimately being born by taxpayers. Rather than paying Forestry Corporation to degrade our forests while losing a beautiful public amenity that is home to native flora and fauna we should be protecting it for future generations. The many benefits that our communities enjoy from our State forests include better water quality, carbon storage, tourism opportunities and public recreation.

**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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Stopping logging of our native forests will help us meet our climate targets by regaining lost carbon. At the same time it will help forests become more resilient by decreasing droughts and fires brought about by Climate Change.