

MARTIN DERBY

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

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- Native forest logging cannot be sustained commercially at the rate NSW Forestry Corp wants to destroy it, without dire environmental consequences like increased natural disasters (flood, bushfire) due to increased climate change impacts caused by felling and losing our natural carbon capturers-our forests.
- Native forest logging cannot be sustained environmentally without ecosystem deterioration and consequence biodiversity loss- quolls, koalas, Regent Honeyeater, Greater Gliders, and Koalas. Over 60% of native forest in NSW has been destroyed or degraded by logging.
- Ongoing logging operations threaten the habitat of over 150 already threatened species at risk of extinction. There is, at present, 400,000 hectares of koala habitat, 310,000 hectares of quoll habitat, and 370,000 hectares of glossy black cockatoo habitat that has been recently logged.
- Native forest logging cannot be sustained financially. \$29 million was spent subsidising Forestry Corporation over the past 2 years, including \$5 million to log forest meant to be protected as the Great Koala National Park-using our taxpayer money! NSW taxpayers would save millions of dollars every year if the harvesting of native timber was stopped. What is even more atrocious is that taxpayers are paying to destroy native wildlife habitat and set species on a course of extinction without their permission.
- The Land and Environment Court has fined NSW Forestry Corporation multiple times for breaches in logging threatened species habitat. On one occasion they were fined \$360,000 for illegal logging that harmed threatened species at Yambulla State Forest in 2020. The Court found that there is a high likelihood of NSW Forestry Corporation reoffending again. Simply put they cannot be trusted as illegal logging has continued and not all illegal logging is found out.
- This one fine in 2020 was essentially 4% of Forestry's entire expected return to NSW that had been lost as a result of a single breach of the law. The illegal actions of Forestry Corp with consequent fines make it even more financially unsustainable. The public do not want to subsidise with taxpayer money destruction of species habitat that must be protected.
- Forestry Corporation's harvest plan lists 19,000 hectares of forest within the proposed Great Koala National Park at risk from logging in 2025. This is a rogue industry that has had numerous breaches of unlawful activities in our native forests, that does not make accurate assessments for native wildlife and logs trees that are identified as habitat for endangered species like the Koala and Greater Glider. This economically unsustainable industry must be phased out with a transition package to affected workers instead of wasting taxpayer money keeping it going whilst tearing down the habitat that sustains our wildlife.

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

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- Maintaining intensive logging for years to come will set the endangered Greater Glider and Koala as well as other native animals (Quoll, Glossy Black Cockatoo) on an accelerated course to extinction.

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- As native forest logging is driving the endangered koala and greater glider to extinction, an immediate logging moratorium should be placed over core greater glider and koala habitat while the FIAP process is underway.
  - On the NSW EPA website it says 'The number of species considered at risk of extinction continues to rise. There are currently 1,025 species and 112 ecological communities listed as threatened under NSW legislation, including 77 species that are presumed extinct.' There has been an increase of 3% in threatened species over the last 3 years. Keeping our native wildlife from going extinct and improving their status should be the goal of the NSW government. This is an environmental value that must be protected. This will not be achieved if logging our native forests continues as a destructive industry in NSW.
  - I fully support an immediate end to native forest logging and a future industry based on sustainable plantations instead.
  - The true value of our native forests does not come from wood production, but from their critical role in carbon storage, the water cycle, providing critical habitat, reducing species extinction -both flora and fauna, reducing fire risk, providing recreation and spiritual connection. These are the environmental and cultural heritage values that must be valued and maintained. This cannot be achieved if logging continues as this is a destructive industry that destroys these values.
  - Conservation outcomes our forests and wildlife so desperately need must be a priority above the interests of continued native forest logging that runs at a financial loss propped up by taxpayer investment.
  - The Great Koala National Park was developed by leading scientists, ecologists and environmental groups to ensure the survival of koalas in the wild. Forestry Corporation has responded by trying to extract as much timber before these precious koala forests are protected. Morally, ethically and environmentally it is wrong to promise a habitat to save an endangered species yet sanction the destruction of this same habitat. The majority of the NSW community want our iconic koala to survive. To survive, their habitat and feed trees MUST be protected now.
  - The NSW Forestry Corporation's accelerated logging activities in the earmarked boundaries within part of the proposed Great Koala National Park in NSW's North Coast is currently operating at a rate more than three times higher than the rest of the NSW combined. NSW Forestry Corporation's own maps indicate that over half of active logging operations on the North Coast fall within the footprint of the proposed national park- despite the park's area only containing one fifth of the state forest in the region. The GKNP has been a targeted area for extensive logging by FCNSW this year and this logging is expected to intensify in 2025. Again, our environmental values are being eroded away by this industry.

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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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- Logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023. Native forest logging contributes only 2.4 million of the total 25 million cubic metres for that year. This means that native forest logging can end as plantation logging is already a thriving industry.
- Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported and this is unacceptable.
- Hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips.
- Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses identified in this section as plantation logging is a satisfactory alternative.

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- Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods.
  - The market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests is just one example.

#### **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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- The transition to a plantation-based industry is nearly complete, with around 90% of Australia's timber needs already being met by current plantations.
- The remaining 10% can easily be satisfied by stopping the export of unprocessed plantation wood and improving the domestic management of existing plantations. More jobs can be absorbed into an expanded plantation industry to transition workers away from the native forestry industry.
- Forestry Corp loggers waste native forest trees as they only take less than 40% of the logged native forest tree in the first instance, with the remainder burned or left in piles to rot. We then export our logged trees as woodchip to overseas markets, and this is unacceptable as we destroy our forests and species' habitats in the process. Most NSW residents are against this practice to destroy our native forests and species' habitats to convert logged trees to exported woodchip. And only taking 40% of the tree what a high price our native animals pay who lose their habitat and their lives.
- Hardwood and softwood plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production.
- Investment in hardwood plantation on already cleared land would supply timber products into the future and would easily replace native forest logging of critical habitat needed for native wildlife survival.
- Shifting to higher-value plantations can better meet timber needs.
- Ending the public forest subsidies would boost sustainable timber production on private lands.

#### **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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- Healthy native forests provide essential water resources.
- Protecting and restoring State Forests will increase the economic value through tourism, carbon storage, job creation and recreational opportunities.
- The Forestry Corporation is currently financially unsustainable, relying on government support and yielding less timber compared to managed plantations that make a profit without taxpayer funding.
- Diverse forest management, particularly Aboriginal models, can enhance the cultural and social value of forests.

#### **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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- Logging in native forests releases large amounts of carbon, contributing to climate change.
- Ending logging will allow our native forests to recover, helping them store more carbon and support climate goals.

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- Healthy forests are essential for reducing the impacts of climate change like wildfires and drought that causes wildlife and community displacement.
  - By stopping logging, forests can play a large role in mitigating climate risks and supporting opportunities in carbon markets.

## Summary

Report after report tells us that we must stop destroying our public native forests and that we must protect, repair and regenerate them and manage them for all of their important values.

We need to end native forest logging now. For our threatened and endangered species, for our communities who suffer more because of increased natural disasters and for the climate.

We need an immediate commitment to end native forest logging now.

Communities across NSW are watching, and waiting, to see that the trend towards species extinctions in NSW stops and turns around. We elected a different state government and we as an electorate are desperate for change. Every day that is wasted means more of our precious forests are logged that we can't get back.

With the process to create a Great Koala National Park across parts of the mid-north coast underway, Forestry Corporation NSW has been intensively targeting some of the most critical koala habitat remaining in Australia. Over 18,800 hectares of core koala habitat are currently being logged or are scheduled for logging in 2025 within the Great Koala National Park assessment area. This has already been mapped. This works out to be around three times more logging operations per hectare than the remainder of NSW.

This 'smash and grab' operation is happening before our eyes within an area that has been already earmarked for future protection. And the state government does nothing. If we want koalas to continue into the future all logging within the GKNP must cease now.

The Government's commitment to the Great Koala National Park could be a proud legacy if it is actioned and not just another broken promise. Ongoing logging by Forestry Corp threatens to erode this promise through accelerated deforestation.

Regarding Greater Gliders over 11,000 hectares of greater glider refugia is currently being logged or is scheduled for logging in the near future.

Four key examples of this targeting are Tallaganda, Badja, Styx River and Tuggolo State Forests. Community surveys over the last 12 months have found a total of 571 Greater Gliders and 154 den trees using on-ground spotlighting and thermal drone surveys paid by the community to charitable organisations- doing the work that NSW Forestry Corp should have been doing properly but failed. These surveys are ongoing and indicate that there are high densities of greater gliders within these areas. If logging continues, many of these greater gliders will be killed. Greater Gliders have been proven to exist in these forests. If the NSW government sanctions logging by Forestry Corp, they are responsible for this species extinction.