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

Current forestry operations are unsustainable! Native forests are a finite and irreplaceable resource. They have layers of complexity and interwoven ecosystems that cannot be replicated by the simple and poor substitutes of "plantation" forests. Given the amount of land that has already been decimated, surely there is enough plantation forest to meet our needs. I do not support the continued, irresponsible pillage of native forests, which is predominantly used to provide woodchip to foreign countries. It is my understanding that protections for mature trees were removed in 2018 and logging was intensified to try and get more wood from native forests. This reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees. If we are genuine about wanting to save threatened native species, then surely we cannot ignore the fact that approximately 174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests. It is indisputable that logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests. In addition to this, native forest logging increases fire threat and intensity, erosion and water way pollution. It also assists the penetration of weeds and other invasive species.

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

A healthy forest is an unlogged forest. It is critical to the future of native species, so many of which are threatened, and the health and wellbeing of all Australians, especially First Nations people. Mature forests generate rainfall, cool the landscape and clean the air. I am fortunate enough to live beside a wildlife corridor and rely on its cooling breezes during summer, as I don't have air conditioning. The difference in temperature it creates is quite incredible, and I can't understand the lack of green spaces I see in urban planning. It is my understanding that approximately 150 threatened species in NSW are directly impacted by logging native forests. I find it disgraceful that far from protecting these living creatures, our governments have been complicit (if not instrumental) in fast tracking their demise and ultimate extinction. Native forest logging compromises many ecosystems and habitats throughout NSW, and this directly impacts the 269 nationally listed threatened species in NSW. Unlogged native forests are also critical for pollinators and play a key role in pollination across the landscape. Without them our own survival is at risk. Finally, native forests provide recreation and improved health outcomes to locals and visitors alike. The cultural and spiritual value of this should not be underestimated. Particularly the fact that First Nations people and communities have ongoing connection to native forests, and forest landscapes are an integral part of cultural practice and knowledge.

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

It is my understanding that logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023. Appallingly, half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported. In addition to this, of the hardwood logs taken

from plantations, just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. Again the vast majority, 87% of hardwood plantation logs, were exported as wood chips! It is misleading to say that hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations is necessary for NSW housing, construction, mining, transport and retail. Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods. Additionally, the market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, with Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forest logs being 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

Plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production and a higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations should be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips. The government, and consequently the taxpayer, is currently subsidising the logging of public native forests by the Forestry Corporation. This is non-competitive and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry. It also steals the right of citizens who wish to preserve these "public" assets for the good of all concerned, not just a few with vested interests who are happy to continue bleeding the public purse dry to line their own pockets. High-end and luxury native hardwood products should only be selectively harvested on private land and under strict conditions.

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

Native forests that are not logged are treasures that have very real benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW. Native state forests cover an area of 2 million hectares in NSW and their management impacts the living conditions of many towns, from water quality in reservoirs to greater tourism industry opportunities, and carbon storage and abatement. The native forest hardwood division of the Forestry Corporation operates at a loss that runs into tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of the NSW public. It also receives tens of millions of dollars in regular equity injections. The people of NSW should not be paying millions of dollars to destroy the biodiversity of our own state and critical habitat for threatened species. Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging. They provide recreation and tourism opportunities. They sustain life and our future. First Nations Ranger Programs have been hugely successful at managing the recovery and health of native forests. Programs like the Githabul Rangers have shown how First Nations knowledge and management can restore the natural and critical function of forests in the landscape. It seems ludicrous that there are so many community and government funded projects aimed at restoring the natural environment and habitat, whilst state sanctioned and tax payer funded destruction still occurs.

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

Native forest logging in NSW is estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year. Ending native forest logging would be the equivalent to removing 840 thousand cars from the roads per year. Logging in a native forest reduces the amount of stored carbon by more than half of the original value. Ending native forest logging will allow previously logged forests to regain lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our emissions targets. Climate change is

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driving increased risks for forest health and continued logging in native forests is exacerbating that risk. Forests that have not been logged are more resilient to the changing climate and catastrophic fires that are occurring as a consequence. Preserving the forests we have is crucial to fighting climate change. We know the damage we have done and the consequences for our survival. We should be doing our best to restore the environment we have so badly damaged. Our existence depends upon it!