

Public submission

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Attention: Forestry Industry Action Panel

I am writing to make a submission to the Panel. I am currently based in Sydney's inner west, but grew up in West Pennant Hills, not far from the Cumberland State Forest. This sanctuary has become even more important – as remnant sclerophyll forest, threatened-species habitat and 'green space' – in the years since I lived there because the area is now even more heavily residential.

I am so glad that the Cumberland State Forest still exists, not least as it is the only State Forest in suburban Sydney. But others should have the chance to enjoy native forest where they live as well.

[Recently-published Australian research](#) has found that possibly half of NSW's native forest has been lost since 1788. Of what remains, about a third is degraded and the ongoing logging of native forest potentially impacts 150 threatened species. Areas that have been logged are also at increased risk of erosion, fire and the invasion of non-native species – risks that are particularly acute after the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires.

New South Wales should plan to follow other states – including Western Australia and Victoria – in ending the logging of native forest. Publicly-owned State Forests, in particular, represent an important opportunity to conserve ecosystems and protect unique flora and fauna.

In regional Australia – even in areas where trees are (or have been) harvested from native forest – [public opinion](#) is broadly against native-forest logging, likely at least in part because the value of intact forest as a tourist destination is higher than it is as woodchips. Further, the NSW Forestry Corporation is a [loss-making entity](#), being propped up by taxpayers' money in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis. The social licence of this industry to operate now seems questionable.

I would like to see an end to native-forest logging in NSW, and I hope that this will be the Panel's recommendation.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute.

Michelle Imison