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Submission ID: 204520

Organisation: N/A

Location: New South Wales

Supporting materials uploaded: N/A

Submission date: 10/12/2024 5:01:50 PM

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

I live next door to a forest which is about to be harvested. This forest then adjoins to a National Park. The state forest has already been logged twice, the last time being approximately 30 years ago. Comparing the habitat within both of these forests, it is clear that 30 years of recovery is only just beginning to emerge as suitable habitat for the local wildlife. Some of the trees left from the last harvest are starting to show signs of hollows or are reaching an age where they will support the wildlife better. Harvesting this for a third time will decimate this emerging habitat, placing the area at least 30 years behind where it could be if it is left to grow now.

When compared to the forest within the national park, this area already shows signs of the damage from two harvests and will not be able to recover from another harvest for many years. To this end, I believe that Native Forest Logging is completely unsustainable.

Already too much damage has been done, as is shown in the ever-decreasing yields from our native forests and the ever-increasing debt that is being created from the public purse.

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

From my own experiences, Forestry Corp NSW have little concern for the wildlife living within the forests which it harvests from.

When I realised that the forest adjacent to our property was to be harvested, I contacted Forestry Corp with many questions (they had already started roading when I made this contact, even though the harvest plan said that they were to contact adjoining properties.)

When I was shown the Ecology report for the area, it clearly stated that there were Nil concerns for any fauna.

I then made them aware that within metres of where they would be logging I had photographic evidence of koalas in the area.

I also made them aware of a multiyear study, conducted very close to where they were about to harvest, which identified the presence of both Greater Gliders and koalas in the area.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ece3.8935?msocid=05f52695382a6c94282d323439fd6d3e>

No action was taken to identify if the animals were in this forest and no reply was given to me after making them aware.

If you look at the information on these two endangered animals on the NSW government pages, its lists the greatest danger to the both of them as habitat loss and deforestation.

It is common knowledge that the use of drones with thermal imaging is by far the best way to identify the presence of wildlife in a forest. Some say that even when ground spotting is done by experienced people, the drones are likely to identify up to 4 times more animals. The Forestry Corp website states that they have trialed the drone technology and have infact been able to identify many animals in areas about to be harvested. However, because it does not identify the den trees, it is seen as not suitable and even though they know the animals are inhabiting the

area, this is not enough to stop the harvesting and the gliders are left with six trees per hectare to survive in.

<https://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/about/releases/2023/forestry-corporation-trials-new-methods-for-identifying-greater-glider-dens>

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

The advancement in engineered timber products is such that using timber sourced from native forests, which are a very slow renewable resource, should be a thing of past generations. Many countries around the world and even other states within Australia have realised this.

Topic 4. The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs

There is plenty of land, already cleared for timber or grazing, that could be used to meet the timber needs of the future by creating more plantations.

This would allow existing native hardwood forests to revive and be a part of our future.

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

The harvesting of our state forests is presently delivering none of the above.

A look to the management of areas such as K'Gari in Queensland show that there was much more benefit in saving the environment and implementing a range of services whereby people could come and engage with the forest rather than having it harvested.

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

Figures state that NSW logging is estimated to release 3.6 million tons of carbon every year.

This figure would be greatly reduced and the forests would be able to even regain lost carbon from previous logging, if the native forests were left alone.

Healthy forests would be less susceptible to the effects of an ever changing climate environment.