

# Public submission

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**Organisation:** *Mint Floors & Shutters – Sydney NSW*

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**Location:** *New South Wales*

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *Attached overleaf*

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## Mint Floors & Shutters – Sydney NSW

Mint Floors & Shutters is one of Sydney's leading retailers of timber floors and window coverings.

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

Wood is a renewable resource. Renewing State Forests with new trees captures more carbon than unmanaged forestry. Wood is the only renewable and sustainable resource for hard flooring that exists in the market.

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

Unmanaged forests are more bush fire prone, putting threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage sites at greater risk of being burnt.

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

Mint Floors & Shutters is one of Sydney's leading retailers of timber floors and window coverings. It's a family owned business, registered in 1980, that began trading during the 1970s.

We are based in Caringbah NSW, where we have two sites, and there is a showroom in Surry Hills NSW.

There is strong demand for our hardwood products in NSW, Queensland and Victoria where there is significant housing and construction underway.

The demand for hardwood has increased in the last 5-6 years while the supply has dropped. So, hardwood prices have increased, and our business costs have increased.

Our main customers are builders, homeowners and apartment and housing estate developers. We also supply carpenters and floor layers.

We chose to use NSW hardwoods for our flooring, decking and joinery products because our business has earned a reputation for providing quality products made from the finest materials.

Mint Floors & Shutters have twenty full-time employees and four part time employees. Most of our employees have mortgages and families. Some of our employees are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.

We support and sponsor the local primary school, family services (a women's refuge) AFL, Rugby, Golf and cycling clubs.

Around 40% of our operating expenses are paid to local businesses, including transport, professional services, advertising and Marketing, cleaning services, catering and local sporting clubs and charities.

## Submission

I have concerns about investing more money into the business because of the uncertainty around the native hardwood timber supply and I believe the hardwood timber industry is being unfairly targeted for being shut down via misinformation and a lack of basic understanding about our forests and their management.

It does not make sense. The alternatives to wood are not environmentally sound. Steel, plastics and stone are all mined and or heavily carbon emitting to produce.

Wood is renewable – plastics and stones are not. Wood is carbon neutral or captures carbon as the trees are growing – the alternatives are not and do not. Reducing forestry operations are counter-intuitive to saving the environment. Forestry and carbon capture through renewable harvesting operations are GOOD for the environment. Unmanaged forests capture carbon at a slower rate and over time cease to capture carbon unlike younger growing trees.

Importing hardwood would mean a lot more carbon is emitted transporting it to Australia.

State Forests are especially important for our business because we rely on a constant supply of high quality hardwood to maintain our good reputation. Plenty of our customers want to know where the wood is coming from.

State Forests are better managed for fuel loads and that protects threatened species when fires come. Their practice of hazard reduction and cool burning produces a good ecological outcome and reduces fire risk.

If native forest harvesting ceased because it was stopped by the government, our operations would be extremely impacted. Employees would lose their jobs and lose their homes here in Sydney and our interstate contractors would be similarly impacted.

The whole company would be on the line.

All our local goods and services providers would be negatively impacted.

### **Topic 4 The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the contribution of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs**

In the mix of supply we receive there would be some product delivered from Private Native Forestry but I understand this is at low levels and private supply cannot replace state forest supply. The difficulty with private landholder supply is that once approved by Local Land Services, in many local government areas, the council requires a separate development application to undertake harvesting on private property. That cause increased complications and cost, let alone being at the whim of a council philosophy.

### **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**

State Forests are particularly important for our business. The hardwood from State Forests is the foundation of our best selling products and are the most environmentally friendly products we sell.

## Submission

**Topic 6 Opportunities to realize carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity benefits, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks, including the greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risk to forests.**

Climate change is clearly creating greater bushfire risk, with hotter and windy conditions more prevalent. Harvesting and active forestry management help reduce the intensity of bush fires and maintain access roads and fire trails for use by fire services.