

MIRANDA COULSON

Submission ID: 205093

---

**Organisation:** N/A

---

**Location:** New South Wales

---

**Supporting materials uploaded:** Attached overleaf

Submission date: 10/13/2024 6:47:58 PM

---

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

This is unsustainable due to: loss of habitat for many species of plants, animals and birds, loss of the value of forests for mitigating climate change, loss of the maintenance of the water cycle, loss of the inheritance of these unique and increasingly scarce places for future generations.

---

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

Environmental: forests provide the refuges for the biodiversity of species, many of whom we have not even named yet. For example, many fungi are not even properly known to science and their role in providing the mycorrhizal network which sustains is in the embryonic stage of being understood. The web of life which is intricate to forests is unique and vast and ill-described. This only occurs in old-growth forests which have been left intact. Disruption by deforestation removes the beating heart of these forests, destroys the water recycling that occurs within them, and, in turn, wrecks the ecosystems on which we depend for a mild climate and water supply. Many species of birds, such as the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot are dependent on native forests for habitat as they have evolved over thousands of years to take the opportunities provided by ecological niches in these unique places. We cannot underestimate our responsibility in caring for forests that provide these niches. We are the guardians of these places.

Cultural: Forests are essential for enriching local communities, providing tourism opportunities and a unique quality of life interacting with the creatures and plants that live in these places. The value of them to First-Nation's peoples is at the heart of their identity and way of life and this should be celebrated and shared by the whole community.

---

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

There should be a shift away from timber and the use of timber should be limited to plantation timber only, on already cleared areas. There should not be clearing of old-growth forests for plantations. Composite products are an excellent substitute, which are resistant to pests, have a much longer life, and could be a huge growth industry.

---

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

We must care for our remaining forests and must not cut down any timber in non-plantation forests. There must not be new clearing of any forests for plantation purposes.

---

**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 must be maintained for their biodiversity and cared for according to systems of cool burning by First-Nation's people, which are well understood to be highly successful in reducing

---

weed species and promoting local species of plants. They provide green lungs for local people to exercise and be immersed in nature. They cool local areas by providing shade and increased precipitation. They are destinations for recreational enjoyment and refuges for fauna and flora. They must be valued due to their role in providing habitat for our fauna and flora. They provide opportunities for recreation and enjoyment. A network of Aboriginal rangers should be introduced to maintain them. There should be no recreational hunting as this is not compatible with the values that we should be promoting in the community. Feral species should be only managed by professionals.

**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**

---

Logging contributes to climate change. This is well understood. Offset schemes are of no use where they lead to the loss of old-growth forests, because of their unparalleled value, unmatched by any offset. It is so important to understand that these forests grow over centuries, and species dependent on forests cannot recover if their habitat is decimated. Loss of these places leads to the extinction of species. Local conditions lead to species that may be unique to that area. These will be irreplaceable. This is unacceptable. Our current understanding is so limited and whilst we are trying to learn we are seeing destruction occur in front of our eyes. Climate change is happening now and is influenced by us. We must take control to reduce emissions by protecting forests immediately.

Submission to the Independent Forestry Panel on the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW

Author : Dr Miranda Coulson

I am a General Practitioner living in NSW.

My connection to forests and the natural environment is profound due to my passion for biodiversity and the richness of our species that we cohabit with.

I love nothing better than roaming through forests, photographing and observing the unique world that occurs there, filled with wondrous life and interactions that we barely understand.

I am a citizen scientist and collate information on species for the Atlas of Living Australia. I perform bird surveys for the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) that include the Richmond Woodlands in NSW to document the species that we still have locally. I watch for rarities such as the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot, which were once locally numerous but have been decimated by habitat loss from land clearing. I document frog calls and the presence of insects as well as rare local plant species, including those where there are remnants in tiny pockets of uncleared areas, such as the Downy Wattle ( *Acacia Pubescens*).

I am re-wilding my own patch with local species to improve the corridor of critically endangered woodland which is on my doorstep. I am a member of the Australian Native Plants society and take any opportunity to explore and document what we have left in our forests.

I watch with horror as Local Planning Panels decimate old growth trees in my local area, due to powerful developers having heavily weighted influence. These bodies are undemocratic and contribute to land clearing in a constant creep which amounts to death of forest corridors by many small but irreversible cuts.

The death of creatures which inhabit these remnants is highly disturbing to me as it occurs in front of my eyes. I am powerless to intervene unless submissions such as this are actively listened to.

I am passionate to protect what we have left and to stop the active removal of habitat which occurs, as we speak, in areas proposed for protection for koalas, for example. This is one index species which represents many others which must be protected.

Australia has one of the highest rates of species loss in the world as well as the highest rate of mammal loss of anywhere in the world.

Our care of forests is essential to stop this from continuing. But more than this, we must re-grow our forests to recover the species which are at imminent risk such as the Regent Honeyeater, Swift Parrot, the Greater Glider and the Koala, to name a few. We must prevent further climate change and prevent wildfire and drought. Preserving our forests is essential to mitigating climate change, maintain the water cycle, and reducing carbon emissions.

This is the only way forward and our efforts must be re-doubled.

Logging operations in old growth forests must be halted. It is not sustainable. Plantations for timber must only be on previously cleared land, not cleared for the purpose of a plantation. Nor must forests be cleared for grazing and beef production. Emphasis must be made on moving

away from timber in favour of new materials such composite ones. There must be an emphasis on preservation of our wild places and re-forestation to develop forests for future generations.

Maybe we then have a chance to do the right thing for our environment and for ourselves.