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

Native Forest logging is unsustainable. Loss of native forest results in erosion, effects on water ways, invasion of invasive weeds and invasive species, loss of biodiversity. The canopy over NSW is dwindling and we have mass numbers of birds dying off unexpectedly due to extreme temperatures recently, with reduced canopy and access to water sources. Canopy is important due to its ability to shade community, and attract rainfall to an area. A large tree takes 5 to 7 years to regrow, a lengthy exercise, yet 5 minutes to destroy. We cannot afford to lose anymore native forest due to the unique biodiversity that Australia has, very different to the wildlife in other countries. As a health practitioner, our direct mental health and physical well-being correlates with our connection to adequate green areas within our local community and there is a risk with loss of canopy and overdevelopment to the level of polluted air we breathe and onset of chronic conditons. Also native tree canopy reduces toxic exposure to modern living. It is well known that the mental health of all individuals improves immensely if people are connected with green spaces- reduction in crime and aggression, places for people to let off steam and maintain a positive outlook on life are essential. We as humans will decline in overall health the more we remove our forests, and this impacts overall quality of life for everyone. It helps people self manage their health and reduces the pressures on hospital system. Our future generation need our native forests. I suggest we also look at sustainable population policys that reduce pressure on native forest destruction. We are not bought up in a tribe, sharing a campfire with a rug on our back, living on a few berries and meat. Each human in current era uses huge amounts of resources- house, car, clothes and 'stuff'. This is all extremely unsustainable for the planet in the long run. Logging of native forests reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees. The kookaburra is one such species that relies on the native forest hollows. How sad that we are destroying their homes. Koalas rely on Eucalyptus trees. We are destroying their homes. A myriad of beautiful birdlife that exists in these native forests can be lost forever if these forests are not protected. Australia is a destination for tourism, one of the attractions is the wildlife, some of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. We should rever our native forests and our wildlife as some of the most exceptional qualities about living in Australia. Preservation should be a matter of pride and respect coming from our people, not just Aboriginals but everyone. Also people that emigrate to Australia need to learn about our native species, so it filters down through council to landowners and how to care for properties and implement native species onto properties. More education needs to be done here.

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

There are 269 nationally listed threatened species in NSW and the landscape scale significance of native forests means that native forest logging compromises many ecosystems and habitats throughout NSW. 150 threatened species in NSW are directly impacted by logging native forests.

First nations people have significant ties to native forests, ecosystems, landscape. They believe that we are carers of mother Earth. We don't own the planet but we should care for our environment as this planet is our Mother. How we treat our Mother reflects on our health. God gave us all the green trees to support life on Earth, and First Nations people have the wisdom to recognise this. It is a spiritual and cultural acceptance that needs to flow through to other Australians. Unfortunately developers are destroying this significantly and for the state government to ban native forest logging is a statement from colonial Australia, that we are learning to respect and rever Mother Earth and develop some respect for our landscape like our Indigenous brothers.

Mature and unlogged native forests are critical for pollinators and play a key role in pollination across the landscape, both inside and outside of forests. Key to Eucalyptus pollination is the native bats. They are very important pollinators for this species and others, and levels are affected by the change in landscape.

We can learn alot about connection to the environment through recreation and finding solace in nature. As they say, ' Get Lost in nature and you will find yourself'. If you have ever got lost in a virgin forest, you know the energy is completely different to a shopping mall - James Redfield.

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

Logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023. Native forest logging contributes only 2.4 million of the total 25 million cubic metres for that year. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips.

Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods (eg. pine) can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods.

The market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests is 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.

A higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations should be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips

Subsidising the logging of public native forests by the Forestry Corporation is non-competitive and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry.

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 have real and tangible benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW.

Native state forests cover an area of 2 million hectares in NSW and impact on a diverse set of living conditions for many towns, from water quality in reservoirs, to greater tourism industry opportunities, and carbon storage and abatement.

Forest Management Models.

Plants, beetles and spiders respond largely independently to retention forestry.

Retaining unlogged patches benefits biodiversity over both the short-and long-term.

Unlogged patches support different biodiversity than logged areas (lifeboating).

Patches impose gradients on species composition of logged areas (forest influence). Ref-
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S037811271500290X>

Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging.

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.

Also: Led by Mark Annandale, Tropical Forests and People Research Centre are developing a portfolio of projects including:

Aurukun Indigenous Protected Area

Pre-mine natural forest salvage logging business planning, strategic planning through

Mine Rehabilitation Forestry Plantation Research and Development for mine land rehabilitation.

The Indigenous are the original in forest management via the slash and burn methods, which have proven to be very effective in regeneration of dense bushland.

The impact and cost to the community:

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 additionally 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.

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

Quoted statistics:

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 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.

Unfortunately:

The way we currently count carbon stores risk creating incentives to plant new trees rather than protect existing forests. Yet old-growth forests store vastly more carbon than young saplings, which will take decades or even centuries to reach the same size. So we need to protect the old-growth forests asap, rather than thinking we can just 'plant a tree' to get the problem resolved. For this reason VIC and WA and other states have banned native forest logging. It will take years to recuperate the loss we have already sustained. Please lets not wait another day to fix this problem. NSW needs to set the standards for good conservation management for the rest of the country. It is a matter of integrity, pride and accountability and responsibility to our Indigenous and all Australians statewide and nationwide. Let us be a state to be proud of!!!