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

I live on the south coast of NSW. My family have been active members of the NSW Rural Fire Service for several generations. I believe Native forest logging is unsustainable, even more so since the 2019 - 20 bushfire season where over 5 million hectares burnt across NSW. From 2018 protections for mature trees were removed and logging was intensified to try and get more wood from native forests. It is well known that Native forest logging increases fire threat and intensity, erosion and water way pollution, and the penetration of weeds and other invasive species. Logging of native forests also reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow bearing trees. Some 174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests, logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests. It is unimagineable not to have greater gliders or several australian parrot species in our bush environs.

Since the early 1980s I have watched local councils sell off huge areas of bushland to Developers & Businesses up & down the NSW coast. Often Environmental Laws have been sidelined or ignored during local planning negotiations, much to the detriment of local communities. Then there has been the logging industry pushing for permits & the long term damage within Native Forest areas has been extensive (both legal & illegal operations) . Whole ecosystems are affected as Native forest logging also reduces the function and health of waterways, including streams and rivers.

During the 2019-20 bushfire season a massive area of pristine bushland was decimated; the human death toll & infrastucture damage was unbelievably traumatic to many NSW communities; plus some unique bush ecosystems are gone forever. As a society we must start putting a more considered value on our irreplaceable environment.

Native Forest logging should be ceased. The extensive plantation forests for renewable timber production should be the only logging areas in NSW. Estimations by the Forestry Corporation of the amount of harvestable timber are consistently over estimated & the damage done is significant. Also the yield from public native forests has declined by 40% since 2010.

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

The bush environment is part of many Australians soul, it is home. I, myself, although not indigenous, have craved it many times but most recently during lockdowns & the continuing Covid19 pandemic. First Nations people and communities have ongoing connection to native forests and forest landscapes are an integral part of cultural practice and knowledge. Native forests in NSW hold significant cultural and spiritual value for First Nations people. Healthy and unlogged forests are critical to the whole environment and both First Nations and non-First Nations culture and identity. Native forests provide recreation and improved health outcomes to locals and visitors alike and are a source of community pride and connection to place.

Other positive points of these forests, particularly healthy mature forests, include: they generate rainfall, cool the landscape and clean the air. 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.

Impacts of future logging are detrimental to these vital ecosystems. There are 150 threatened species in NSW that are directly impacted by logging native forests. On top of this stat 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.

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

It is awful that such beautiful Native forests are ravaged to become woodchips! Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported, how horrid. Whereas hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips. 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.

Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses identified in this section. Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods. Fortunately 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. The future should see other technological changes which will assist further in the demand for native forest wood.

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

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. Plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production. The wood chip industry is diabolical on so many levels, a higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations should be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips.

Future 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

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. The 2019-20 bushfire season was tragic & showed us how important the bush & it's inhabitants are to aussies. I grieved for so much lost during that season, some never to return, extinction is final. Native forests that are not logged have real and tangible benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW. Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging.

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. It defies logic that 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.

Funding should be allocated into more positive areas like the First Nations Ranger Programs. These 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.

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

Forests that have not been logged are more resilient to the changing climate and catastrophic fires that are occurring as a consequence. Climate change is driving increased risks for forest health and continued logging in native forests is exacerbating that risk. Logging in a native forest reduces the amount of stored carbon by more than half of the original value. Native forest logging in NSW is estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year.

Ending native forest logging will allow previously logged forests to regain lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our emissions targets. Ending native forest logging would be the equivalent to removing 840 thousand cars from the roads per year. Ceasing logging in native forests not only benefits locally but regionally, nationally & globally.