

Public submission

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Submission to Stop Native Logging in NSW

Native forest logging in NSW is unsustainable and detrimental to both environmental and cultural values. The Forestry Corporation consistently overestimates the amount of harvestable timber, with the yield from public native forests declining by 40% since 2010. Logging reduces carbon storage, erodes biodiversity, and increases fire risk, while also diminishing the health of waterways and threatening 174 species that rely on hollow-bearing trees. The removal of mature trees, essential for ecosystem function, disrupts pollination and compromises habitats across the state, impacting over 150 threatened species. 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

Native forests provide irreplaceable cultural, environmental, and social benefits. They are vital to the identity of both First Nations and non-First Nations people, supporting cultural heritage, community health, and biodiversity. Logging native forests accounts for only 9% of Australia's total log production in the year 2023, with much of it turned into low-value products like woodchips. Sawn and treated softwoods can easily substitute for native hardwoods, and plantation timber already provides 91% of Australia's log production.

The economic justification for native forest logging is weak. The Forestry Corporation's native hardwood division operates at a significant loss, while subsidies distort the timber market. Unlogged forests provide far more value through tourism, carbon storage, and ecosystem services. First Nations Ranger Programs, such as the Githabul Rangers, demonstrate the success of Indigenous-led forest management in restoring forest health.

Ending native forest logging would prevent the release of 3.6 million tonnes of carbon annually—equivalent to taking 840,000 cars off the road—and allow forests to recover and sequester lost carbon. Native forests are more resilient to climate change when left intact, playing a key role in mitigating climate risks.

I urge the NSW government to cease native forest logging, prioritising sustainable forestry practices, expanding plantations, and supporting biodiversity and climate goals through forest conservation.

We must urgently do this for the animals, the planet and future generations.