

NAME REDACTED

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

Forestry operations in NSW are self-evidently unsustainable. In 2007, the NSW EPA stated: "old growth forests, in particular, have been severely reduced and now represent less than 10% of their original extent."\*

This % has no doubt reduced further in the intervening 17 years.

On the Forestry Corporation's masterfully greenwashed website\*\* they claim that "Under the Regional Forest Agreements, approximately 83 per cent of public forests in NSW are permanently set aside for conservation," making it sound like a large amount of forest is protected. This is at best disingenuous, if not an outright falsehood. So little native forest remains, and so little of that is defined as 'public' that 83% is meaningless propaganda. 83% of next to nothing is still next to nothing.

\* <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/-/media/epa/corporate-site/resources/pnf/07362oldgrowth.pdf>

\*\*<https://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/operations/about-our-harvesting-operations/hardwood-timber-plantations>

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

Native forests, and old-growth forests in particular, are critical to threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage values.

As recently as 5 Aug 2024, ANU, Griffith Uni and Uni of QLD published the article "More than half of NSW's forests and woodlands are gone as ongoing logging increases extinction risks, study shows"\*

This is a damning indictment of the ongoing failure of successive NSW governments and public service agencies to protect our environment for the good of the public and future generations. Frankly, DPIE and successive ministers should hang their heads in shame at the pitiful amount of 'progress' in the last 20 years.

Highlights from their report:

We used historical loss and degradation as a baseline to evaluate recent logging events (from 2000 to 2022) across NSW. We found continued logging is having impacts on 150 threatened species.

Forty-three of these species now have 50% or less of their intact habitat remaining in NSW. They include the three brothers wattle, regent parrot and growling grass frog. Two species, Sloane's froglet and Glenugie karaka, have less than 10% of intact habitat remaining.

\*<https://science.anu.edu.au/news-events/news/more-half-nsws-forests-and-woodlands-are-gone-ongoing-logging-increases-extinction#:~:text=We%20used%20historical%20loss%20and,intact%20habitat%20remaining%20in%20NSW.>

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

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I entirely support the promotion of timber products in high-value applications, provided those products are sourced from reforestation projects using new growth timber in plantations grown on previously degraded and old deforested habitat, in mixed species formats that support threatened and native species.

I do not support destroying old growth forest, and then replanting with vast tracts of homogenous exotic softwood species that don't provide habitat for native species.

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

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I entirely support the expansion of both public and private plantation forestry, including exotic softwoods like pine, for high value applications.

However this support is subject to plantations being planted and managed in a way that supports, protects and increases the area for threatened and endemic native species. Forestry should have rigorous, best practice governance, with legislative oversight that is active and has teeth.

It is unconscionable for forestry operators to whine that such principles impact the efficiency and cost of forestry, while at the same time wanting to export woodchips for toilet paper.

If the result is an increase in the costs of timber materials, so be it. High quality timber sourced from well managed, environmentally responsible Australian forestry should be a premium product, about which Australians (and the forestry workers involved) should be proud.

We should not be known for destroying ecosystems to produce low value products that the rest of the world uses to wipe their backsides.

### **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**

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State Forests should play a leadership role in establishing, implementing and monitoring best practice land management practices. Too often, their actions have been seen to be intransigent, aggressive and counter to the public good.

That the NSW Forestry Corporation has been fined 12 times for illegal logging activities in the last 3 years alone, with 21 investigations still pending\*, is a sign that their board and leadership team needs complete replacement. The leadership group under which these activities occurred deserve nothing but contempt.

<https://www.edo.org.au/2024/02/29/hope-for-nsw-forests-court-decision-upholds-communitys-right-to-challenge-native-forest-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**

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These opportunities should all be strongly and actively explored. Offsets and ACCUs have had some bad press, but the intent is good. NSW govt / DPIE should play a leadership role in both Australia and internationally in setting best practice international frameworks for both carbon and biodiversity metrics.