

# Public submission

NAME REDACTED

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

- State Forests allow for sustainable timber harvesting through selective logging and forest regeneration practices. This meets local demand for timber while reducing reliance on imported timber, which may not adhere to the same environmental standards. National Parks, in contrast, prohibit any form of extractive use, making State forests vital for local timber supply and forest product industries.
- Unlike National Parks, which are primarily conservation-focused, State forests are managed under a multiple-use framework. This allows for the integration of timber production, recreational access, conservation, and other land uses. This flexibility supports a range of industries, including the timber sector, while still adhering to environmental management protocols such as the Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (IFOAs).
- State forests in NSW optimize economic and social outcomes through a multi-use approach that balances sustainable timber production, recreational use, biodiversity conservation, fire management, and community engagement. This holistic approach ensures that forests contribute to local economies, protect the environment, and provide social and cultural benefits, fostering long-term sustainability and community well-being.
- While National Parks are key for biodiversity conservation, State Forests also play a critical role. Through Forest Management Zone systems, State Forests protect areas of high conservation value, such as habitats for endangered species, even while allowing regulated harvesting in other areas. This balance allows for biodiversity conservation alongside economic use, integrating sustainable practices that mimic natural disturbance regimes.
- State forests offer a multifunctional approach that can benefit the environment, economy, and society simultaneously. They allow for the sustainable use of resources while maintaining high environmental standards. In contrast, National Parks are strictly conservation-focused and offer limited economic and recreational opportunities. Depending on the context and priorities—such as balancing resource use with conservation—State Forests may offer a more flexible and pragmatic solution.

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

- Active management in State forests, including controlled burns and hazard reduction strategies, can result in healthier forests that are more resilient to bushfires. National Parks, where fire management can be more passive due to strict conservation mandates, may face higher risks of uncontrolled wildfires, especially in dense, unmanaged areas.
- State Forests actively engage in fire management practices such as controlled burns and hazard reduction strategies to mitigate the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Proper forest management reduces fuel loads, improves forest health, and protects local communities and infrastructure from fire risks. This proactive approach helps protect both ecological values and economic assets.
- State Forests employ trained and experienced experts for ecology work and builds a knowledge base of threatened species to guide its present and future management. State Forests has a better knowledge base of its estate and threatened species management than most other land managers.

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

- State Forests contribute to the regional and national economy through forestry operations, providing employment opportunities, especially in rural areas. In contrast, National Parks contribute primarily through tourism, which may not provide the same level of year-round, high-skill employment in forestry-dependent regions.
- State forests provide materials for critical infrastructure, such as utility poles, marine piles, bridges, and housing. The availability of durable, high-quality timber from State forests supports industries vital to national infrastructure, transport, and mining sectors, contributing to broader economic development.
- Wood is used in everyday life. Construction of concrete products such as bridges and culverts etc. use timber for the form work. Paper is still used as an everyday item.

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

- Plantation timber is not a direct substitute for native timber. They have different density/hardness properties due to their different growth rates and age. Not all species are able to be grown in a plantation either due to their slow growth rate making them uneconomical.
- Plantation expansion will be competing with other land uses such as Agriculture and housing, which are both critical industries in NSW, which are doing it tough.
- Plantation security is also in question as there are media reports about protests against harvesting of plantations in and around the Coffs Harbour and Bellingen area. Media reports that a protest camp has been set up for 3-4 months protesting against harvesting a plantation at Pine Creek State forest. There have also been historic protests against harvesting plantations at Tarkeeth, which is outside the town of Bellingen as well. This type of activity does not inject confidence into investors.
- If companies are to invest a significant amount of money in establishing new plantations in NSW protests as well as reimagining of the P&R Code do not instil confidence that they will be able to harvest the trees in 30-40 years time.

### **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 offer a broader range of recreational activities, including off-road driving, camping, hunting, and horseback riding, which are more restricted in National Parks due to conservation priorities. This makes State Forests more accessible for a wider demographic of users, while still promoting environmental stewardship.
- State Forests also provide opportunities for other Agricultural industries such as grazing and apiary. These activities support regional Australia as well as assist with providing food

security to those who live in our towns and cities. These activities are not permitted on National Parks and do not align with their current policies.

- State Forests play a key role in facilitating community engagement with nature. They are important spaces for recreation, education, and the promotion of physical and mental health. Community programs, forest education initiatives, and volunteer opportunities enhance social cohesion and environmental awareness.

**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**

- Biomass from State forests can be used for bioenergy, contributing to renewable energy goals and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. This further enhances the economic utility of State Forests while supporting sustainable energy initiatives. Biomass production is currently only sourced from the State forest plantation estate.
- Wood products, especially those harvested from native forests, have a much lower carbon footprint compared to traditional building materials like steel, concrete, and aluminium. By using wood as a substitute for these high-emission materials in construction and manufacturing, the overall carbon emissions from these sectors can be significantly reduced. This "substitution effect" helps mitigate climate change by lowering the demand for energy-intensive materials.
- Harvesting native forests through sustainable methods, such as selective logging or clear-cutting with reforestation, encourages regrowth and the development of younger, faster-growing trees. Young trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub> at a faster rate than older, mature trees, enhancing the overall carbon sequestration capacity of the forest. Managed regrowth ensures that the forest continues to function as a carbon sink. – plantation
- Sustainable harvesting prevents deforestation by ensuring that the forest is not converted to other land uses such as agriculture or urban development. Maintaining forest cover through regulated harvesting practices protects biodiversity and supports climate regulation functions, such as water cycle stabilization and temperature regulation.
- Sustainable harvesting of native forests can play a vital role in climate change mitigation by sequestering carbon, storing it in durable wood products, providing a renewable alternative to fossil-based materials, and preventing emissions from natural disasters. When managed responsibly, native forests can contribute to both economic development and the global fight against climate change, ensuring long-term environmental sustainability.