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

Native forest logging is driving habitat degradation and species extinction. The removal of our native forests results in fauna mortality during the clearing process and aftermath, reduction in habitat availability, habitat fragmentation, decline in species diversity and a reduction in old growth trees which contain key habitat features in the landscape (eg hollows, foraging resources). There are a range of additional environmental impacts from native forest logging including a reduction in water quality, soil erosion, the spread of invasive species, and a reduced ability of forests to capture and store carbon. Native forestry is completely unsustainable and I do not support it. Not only is the conservation of forests important for their own sake, but humans are also reliant on the ecosystems services that forests provide. These include clean air, water, favourable climatic conditions and food (eg habitat for pollinators).

By comparison, plantation forestry is much more sustainable. Fast-growing pine trees enable wood supply with minor ecological impacts where plantations are established on historically cleared land. A future forestry operations that is 100% plantation pine, is the most sustainable direction. The transition out of native forestry must start now with a maximum 2 year process to complete.

Furthermore, native forest logging is economically unsustainable with millions of dollars in annual losses despite subsidies and profits from the plantations sector covering up a high proportion of the losses.

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

Forests in NSW hold irreplaceable environmental and cultural value. Australians have a love of the outdoors and enjoy recreational activities in forests including camping, bushwalking, rogaining, birdwatching, mountain biking and many more. Additionally, native forests carry significant Aboriginal cultural heritage, and further forestry activities could jeopardize these values. It is vital to halt logging in these areas to safeguard both biodiversity and cultural heritage for current and future generations to enjoy. I have a love of the bush and frequently camp and hike in State Forests and National Parks with my family. I want my child to continue to enjoy the diverse forests of NSW and their creatures into adulthood.

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

The demand for timber products in sectors such as housing, construction, mining, and retail can be met almost entirely by plantation-sourced timber. Native hardwoods, often sought for their durability, have alternatives available in plantation products and other materials, even for demanding applications like wharfing, power poles, and structural supports. For more niche uses, like furniture and veneers, the demand is minimal and can be satisfied by recycled wood or plantation timber. There is no justification for native forest logging to continue, given these alternatives.

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

A complete transition to softwood and hardwood plantations is essential for ensuring a sustainable timber supply. Expanding plantations should be prioritized, but they must be established on already degraded lands to avoid further loss of native vegetation. Private native forestry also needs to be phased out to protect remaining biodiversity. The future of forestry in NSW lies in plantations, not in the continued exploitation of native forests.

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 best public use of State Forests is biodiversity conservation as priority, public recreation and Aboriginal cultural heritage that is aligned with conservation priorities. Public native forests should be transferred to the National Park system and managed for conservation. Aboriginal joint management models, under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, should be pursued to honor Aboriginal heritage and foster sustainable management practices.

State Forests that contain plantations should remain under the management of the Department of Primary Industries, but stricter oversight is necessary to prevent environmental damage and breaches of regulations. NSW Forestry Corporation has demonstrated its inability to manage public resources effectively, with multiple historical fines and litigation.

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

Intact forests play a crucial role in capturing and storing carbon, helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. NSW's forest estate is vital for this process, contributing to both biodiversity preservation and carbon sequestration. I do not support the expansion of carbon and biodiversity markets into NSW forestry. This is because there is a lack of integrity in carbon trading and biodiversity offset schemes and there is no evidence they are effective in achieving their aims. Protecting native forests should not be used to offset carbon emissions elsewhere, this would undermine efforts to reduce overall carbon emissions which should be done through changes to consumption and resource use by corporations and governments. Since the Biodiversity Offset Scheme (BOS) was implemented in 2017, NSW has seen an increase in annual native vegetation clearing, also attributable to the changes in the LLS Act. Numerous faults in the BOS were found in the 5 year review, including credit trading. Some biodiversity impacts, such as the loss of key species or ecosystems, are "non-offsetable," meaning that no realistic offset can fully compensate for the damage done. Perverse outcomes are likely in pursuing carbon and biodiversity markets. Native forests should not be monetised.