

Public submission

NAME REDACTED

Submission ID: 204423

Organisation: *N/A*

Location: *New South Wales*

Supporting materials uploaded: *Attached overleaf*

Submission date: 10/12/2024 1:13:14 PM

Dear Forestry Industry Action Panel,

I'm 25 years old, and I'm a resident of [REDACTED], NSW. I've lived in the Illawarra my entire life, and have always felt a deep connection to place here, nestled between the Pacific ocean where I enjoy swimming, snorkelling, and surfing, and the lush, green escarpment where I enjoy hiking and swimming in waterfalls. I'm really grateful to have grown up in a place surrounded by nature, and I grow more grateful for it as I get older.

I often find solace in taking weekend trips hiking and camping down the south coast in NSW, in Yadboro State Forest, Budawang National Park, and Murramarang National Park, and further down the coast towards Eden. The places that I love along the NSW south coast have been subjected to widespread logging over the past few decades, so this issue is very dear to me. I'd like to thank the Forestry Industry Action Panel for taking public submissions on the extremely important issue of the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW. Please consider my points below:

1. Climate change risk

I felt devastated and terrified when the bushfires of 2019-20 destroyed habitat and homes across the south coast and the places I love. The practice of logging native forests in NSW should be taken into consideration, as logging, especially the logging of old growth trees, leaves forests more susceptible to fire. Younger trees are less resilient to fire, and debris from logging leaves more fuel for fires to get out of hand. These facts are reported on by the [CSIRO](#) and the [NSW Government](#).

We know that bushfires will continue to pose greater risk in the future. The catastrophic bushfires of 2019-20 were exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. I know that within my lifetime there will be more extreme weather events caused by climate change than that of my parents and grandparents. [A briefing paper by the Climate Council](#) reported that bushfire conditions are more dangerous than in the past, and bushfires have been exacerbated by drought, dry fuels and soils, and record breaking heat. To combat this, the presence of healthy forests helps mitigate bushfire risk. Stopping logging allows forests to recover, helping them store more carbon and support climate goals. By stopping logging of NSW native forests, NSW is taking a step towards mitigating climate change and future climate risks. This could ultimately mean less deaths and less homes lost from future fires.

2. Biodiversity & habitat loss and extinction

In addition to this, intact forests provide vital refuge for our unique wildlife, particularly threatened species. In the future, I want to be able to take my kids out bush and show them how unique and precious the landscapes and wildlife we have here on the NSW south coast. I want to take them spotlighting and show them the unique species we have that rely on old growth forests, like the greater glider, yellow bellied glider, powerful owls, and koalas. But I fear these species will go extinct before I have kids, due to deforestation and bushfires. [The Wilderness Society notes that greater glider populations have crashed by 80% in the last 20 years](#). Greater gliders depend on old growth trees for tree hollows, which is where they spend most of their time. Logging of their habitat has contributed to the species becoming endangered - a species which were once abundant on the NSW south coast. This is the same

for the yellow-bellied glider, swift parrot, gang gang cockatoo, powerful owl, and our national icon: the koala. [Deforestation and bushfires are the greatest threats to our iconic species.](#)

3. The forestry industry in NSW is operating at a loss.

[Forestry Corporation of NSW's 2022-23 annual report revealed losses of \\$15 million](#), and taxpayers in NSW are footing the bill. In 2021-22 they operated with a \$9 million loss, and in 2020-21 it was \$20 million.

4. There is also no current necessity to continue to log NSW native forests to build houses.

Hardwood and softwood plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production. We have plantations that can supply the timber products that we need, and plantations can provide jobs for those who want to continue to work in the industry. It makes no sense to continue to allow an industry that contributes to the extinction crises, destroys biodiversity, and makes our environment more vulnerable to bushfire, to continue to operate. Especially so, given it is operating at a loss.

Again, I'd like to thank the Forestry Industry Action Panel for taking public submissions on this extremely important issue. I appreciate you taking into deep consideration the pleas of community members across NSW who have expressed strong concerns (like I have listed above) for why our forests should be protected.

Sincerely,
A concerned community member