

Public submission

NAME REDACTED

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Please accept this as my submission for comment on the 'forestry Industry Action Plan.

Please keep my personal name from being publicised in public records documenting this submission.

Due date: 13/10/2024

I support the immediate phasing out of logging of native forests in NSW and beyond.

The sustainability of current and future forestry operations has passed its real – time frame which was set over three decades ago. I have been disappointed that logging as it currently occurs has been allowed to continue for such an extended time. It is sickening to see old growth trees continually logged from areas access has been allowed for logging and to see the poorly managed practices of logging. It appears that people within the industry see the trees as resource and not for the habitat they really are. If this industry had been more closely managed and supervised according to sustaining the industry in a transparent and just way I do not believe we would have to be attempting to save what forests are currently left. I have personally seen over logging in my area and have been shocked at the speed of current logging in what appears to be a panic response from industry that knows its days are numbered and access to bigger trees is becoming more limited.

The koala trees that are earmarked are young saplings by industry standards have not been meeting the environmental sustainability guidelines and practices, and have contributed to the current situation that is devastating Australia's local koala populations where corridors are becoming fewer for animals to safely cross into areas to inhabit, feed from. Urban planning has also impacted on our native animals and the ecological state is in need of major regeneration. The koala has moved into a state of endangered and if that does not say enough the rest of the wildlife and unique habitat and flora has not hope. It is up to the people in this country to step up and do something and I am grateful the opportunity to have a voice to speak on behalf of those trees and wildlife, habitat when they do not.

I feel personally responsible not only for the loss of environment but for adding to the fuel of one of the greatest issues being faced by our younger generation and increase in mental health in general, lack of clean water resources, depletion of good oxygen , total disregard for our Aboriginal cultural heritage and value of 'Taking care of Country'. We are all responsible for taking care of country, and we need a cultural change in how we relate to our natural environment and live more healthy lives and deliver a better range of environmental, economic and social outcomes and options for diverse management, including Aboriginal forest management models.

Since Covid, our regional and rural towns have been ever exploding and people have been moving away from the cities in huge numbers, they move to these areas for a better life and this is crucial to improving the well-being and social, mental health of our population that we maintain and sustain the forests around us. We need to embrace our unique diverse forests and enjoy them for the

amazing life source that they are not just as a resource for industry to mine in a sense. Once a tree is taken it is unlikely to ever be replaced. Trees just don't grow overnight into magnificent giants that they can be. This issue has larger devastating impacts than your six points of interest that the NSW government has suggested and it is for this reason I am submitting one overall response, if I could shorten this to be one page I would be happy to do so but as this is written in urgency and desperation I feel I have to get every word in that expresses the importance why I feel we need to step back and really take a proper assessment of what we can do NOW to prevent further concerns.

I feel that there are no further options regarding the management of our forests, native in particular to continue at the rate it has been allowed and a recovery period of at least 10 -20 years is necessary to help sustain what is left. NSW has dropped the ball and needs to be more accountable for the mess the industry has been allowed to create. It is absolute vandalism against our way of life and the many lives that we need to protect within the forests. The transition has long passed its date when it was first discussed. The main issue was loss of jobs at the time, and I believe that there has been ample time for workers in this industry to have been trained and moved into areas of sustainability and tourism within the ecological field. Workers really do not care what job they do, they just want food on the table, their bills paid and a life worth living free of debt. Why this transitional period has been totally bypassed all of these years has left us all in the predicament that we are in now. I admit, I use hardwood for building, and I have to tell you the timber I get is sub-standard to what was being felled decades ago due to the limited years it has been in the ground and it does not have the integrity that older timber has. I know this as I have a building that is over 90 years old with its 'bones' in old hardwood sourced from the local area. There are three timber mills in my local area a small number compared to the number operating when they stripped the landscape almost bare back in the days of 'cedar getting'. The timber being sourced is not managed well and have heard the chairman of 'Timber NSW' make statements that it 'did not know that it needed to consult with our local LGA representatives in regards to the clearing of native forests' (North Coast Radio in October 2022). This is only one example of the disregard for how the industry disrespects and misuses the power it has had over conservation groups, recommendations from Environmental protection boards etc.

Although south eastern Queensland has yet to sign a regional forest agreement I have found a guide published many years ago that has identified a plan worthy of taking note of. As I live in Northern NSW which borders on Queensland I feel that this is relevant. Please refer to the case-study transitioning report by Major features of the South East Queensland Forests Agreement Date: 16 September 1999. Parties: Australian Rainforest Conservation Society, Queensland Conservation Council, The Wilderness Society, Queensland Timber Board and Queensland Government (p, 3).

Objectives: • a world class conservation reserve system; • ecologically sustainable management of forests; • a competitive and efficient timber industry; • enhanced economic development and employment prospects for rural communities. *Conservation measures:* • Immediate addition to the conservation reserve system of about 425,000 hectares. • Logging of native forests on state land to cease by the end of 2024. • No clear felling, no export woodchip industry based on native forests, no logging of old growth or wilderness areas. *Supply during the 25-year transition:* • Logging to

continue for 25 years with hardwood forests to be logged once. • Wood supply agreements with industry to be 25 years, compensatable and tradeable. • Current allocations to mills to remain until end of 2024 and allocation zones to be used flexibly to provide the approved volumes for the 25-year period. Government support for industry: • The development of hardwood plantations to enable industry to transition to a plantation-based hardwood resource by 2025 or sooner. • Incentives to facilitate transition to value-added hardwood products, hardwood plantation timbers and private. (<https://invasives.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Case-Study-Transitioning-out-of-logging-native-forests-Rebranded.pdf>)

The point of this really is clear, at the time this paper was written was 25 years ago and what efforts have been put in place not only in the state of NSW but just across the border effects what happens in my back yard. Logging cannot continue at the rate of the ongoing destruction on several layers it has been. The blind sightedness, ignorance, greed and lack of transparency and illegal deforestation cannot continue.

“Time to wake up and make decisions that are based on real-time, not for another two or more decades. It has to end now.”

This is truly a sorry state of affairs driven by industry greed with little foresight into the bigger picture. The forests that are left need to be transferred to national parks and hardwood plantations logged ONLY!! No more licenses into native forests for purpose of logging for biofuel full stop The carbon is more valuable in the ground, not burned into our atmospheres, there is nothing ecological about destroying precious habitat for black smoke that pollutes the atmosphere and our airways.

There is no future in our country for destroying habitat that belongs to everyone, especially the future generation and our increasingly dwindling native animal and microbiological irreplaceable ecology unique to our continent.

Yours concerning,

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