

# Public submission

NAME REDACTED

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**Organisation:** *N/A*

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**Location:** *New South Wales*

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *Attached overleaf*

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# Submission template

## Your submission

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

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The history of forestry in NSW has seen a massive reduction in 'old-growth' eucalypt forests, a significant shift toward small tree sizes (diameter and height) across the forest of NSW, a severe reduction in rainforest and wet rainforest gully forests and rainforest tall wet eucalypt forests more generally, a massive loss of hollow-bearing trees (HBTs), and huge negative impacts on habitat for threatened and rare flora and fauna. Forestry operations in NSW have been demonstrably unsustainable for many decades, by choice and by design. I worked in forestry management with Forestry Commission of NSW later State Forests of NSW for more than 20 years. I was privy to decisions by SFNSW and Industry that opted (in the 1970-1980s) for short-term maximum utilisation versus long-term sustainable (selective) harvesting. The consequence was (and remains) a depleted and nearly exhausted resource driven into smaller and smaller tree sizes and an industry driven to demand the last of the large wood resources previously protected in riparian and other exclusion zones, or the few remaining areas with larger trees. The inevitable collapse of the 'quality' wood industry has been delayed by political interference and the sacrifice of the last of the high quality forests with large trees. The industry has been corrupted by ideology instead of adopting ecology and has delivered an ecological disaster that will continue to diminish our native forests for centuries to come. There is nothing sustainable about current forestry management.

The broader question for the government and people of NSW is: what sort of forests do we want for the future? How do we see the future for these forests? As sawlog factories or as biodiverse native forests? The former is where we are located now... the potential is for restoration of other values but only if we cease native forest logging.

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

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The Australian forests have deep time connections to Gondwana (Kooyman et al. 2014; Gandolfo et al. 2011; ironically including the genus *Eucalyptus*), protect plant assemblages with high levels of endemism, and are recognised globally for their evolutionary history and contemporary biological values. This is reinforced by the inclusion of several forest areas in NSW as World Heritage (in NSW) and ironically highlights that despite the protection of some small areas of forest their broader protection is not secure as forests of similar composition are regularly subjected to massive disturbances associated with commercial, industrial forestry practices. Those practices compromise landscape scale ecological dynamics and erode the potential for populations to interact and for species to survive through time, including listed Threatened Species. Forestry activities have had (and continue to have) substantial and significant impacts on threatened species. One of the most significant and catastrophic impacts of forestry has been the

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reduction in hollow-bearing trees by harvesting of large trees. In my experience, hollows will generally be more abundant in the larger canopy trees ( $\geq 60$  -  $> 80$ cm), or emergent very large ( $\geq 100$ cm dbh) canopy trees, with large diameter sizes generally suggestive of greater age. There is a considerable literature that supports those observations including as examples (Gibbons and Lindenmayer 1996, page 251, 2.4 Tree Size; Wormington and Lamb 1999, Introduction; Todarello and Chalmers 2007, page 2, para. 5) who (like the Introduction in Wormington and Lamb 1999) all describe similarly that: "One of the most important of these attributes was tree size because suitable hollows develop in trees only when they grow beyond some threshold girth, and also because the number of hollows increases with tree diameter". Forestry activity has been a major force in driving once common species such as Greater Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider to be listed as threatened and vulnerable to extinction.

Kooyman, R.M., Wilf, P., Barreda, V.D., Carpenter, R.J., Jordan, G.J., Sniderman, J.M.K., Allen, A., Brodribb, T.J., Crayn, D., Feild, T.S., Laffan, S.W., Lusk, C.H., Rossetto, M., Weston, P.H. (2014) Paleo-Antarctic Rainforest into the Modern Old World Tropics: the Rich Past and Threatened Future of the 'Southern Wet Forest Survivors' *American Journal of Botany* 101:2121-2135.

Gandolfo MA, Hermsen EJ, Zamalao MC, Nixon KC, González CC, Wilf P, Cúneo NR, Johnson KR. 2011. Oldest known Eucalyptus macrofossils are from South America. *PLOS ONE* 6: e21084.

Gibbons P, Lindenmayer DB. 1996. A review of issues associated with the retention of trees with hollows in wood production forests. *Forest Ecology and Management* 83: 245-279.

Gibbons P, Lindenmayer DB, Barry SC, Tanton MT. 2000. Hollow formation in eucalypts from temperate forests in southeastern Australia. *Pacific Conservation Biology* 6: 218-228.

Lindenmayer DB, Cunningham RB, Pope ML, Gibbons P, Donnelly CF. 2000. Hollow sizes and types in Australian eucalypts from wet and dry forest types – a simple rule of thumb for estimating size and number of hollows. *Forest Ecology and Management* 137: 139-150.

McLean CM, Bradstock R, Price O, Kavanagh RP. 2015. Tree hollows and forest stand structure in Australian warm temperate Eucalyptus forests are adversely affected by logging more than wildfire. *Forest Ecology and Management* 341: 37–44.

Todarello P, Chalmers A. 2007. The characteristics of five species of hollow-bearing trees on the New South Wales central coast. *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales* 128: 1-14.

Wormington K, Lamb D. 1999. Tree hollow development in wet and dry sclerophyll eucalypt forest in south-east Queensland, Australia. *Australian Forestry* 62(4): 336-345.

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

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Should be sourced from plantation timber only, and only where those plantations do not themselves have negative impacts on native forest habitats.

### **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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Private Native Forestry and the shift to private forest harvesting has precipitated catastrophic and confounding issues for the forest of NSW, exacerbating impacts on native flora and fauna habitats, and further reducing the habitat resources for Threatened Species.

Plantation forestry has a future in NSW if managed well, but to date the forestry agencies have not managed anything well, so the future for wood production looks uncertain. The irony (of course) is that foresters are meant to be able to grow trees and manage forests. The loss of those skills is something that (professionally) I lament the loss of.

### **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 are important for the delivery of a range of environmental, social and cultural values but have been severely reduced in terms of that potential. The fixation on commercial management and economic outcomes has decimated the productive capacity of these native forest areas and diminished them ecologically and culturally. Current management paradigms are entirely unsustainable across all values.

### **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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Those markets are currently corrupt, have been reported as such (The Guardian and current inquiry into environmental offsets in NSW; and carbon accounting in Australia) and so cannot be supported.