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

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I'm very concerned that all the scientific evidence tells us that logging in native forests is not sustainable. It removes older trees and destroys hollows and other habitats for our precious native wildlife, like greater gliders, koalas and native birds.

I understand from media reports, including information from The Conversation that Australia is THE world leader of mammal species extinctions in recent centuries, and this is an ongoing tragedy for our state and our country into the present day.

NSW and Australia more broadly, has enabled the horrific demise of the world's most remarkable mammal assemblage, around 87% of which is found nowhere else.

I have read with alarm in The Conversation how being an Australian native mammal is perilous. Thirty-eight native mammal species have been driven to extinction since colonisation and possibly seven subspecies.

I would like to draw to the Panel's attention that there are a range of compounding factors driving the demise of our Australian mammals, including invasive predators, changing fire patterns and climate change. However, I understand the most pernicious and unnecessary of these human-induced factors is widespread habitat modification and destruction.

Continued logging will contribute to the extinction of the wildlife that depends on it for their survival. And our native fauna in NSW is already so up against it, since the devastating bushfires of 2019/2020.

I'm sure the Panel will recall the international alarm caused by the impact of those fires on nearly three billion animals, mammals, reptiles, birds, and frogs, who were killed or displaced by Australia's devastating 2019-20 bushfires.

I understand the breakdown was 143 million mammals, 2.46 billion reptiles, 180 million birds, and 51 million frogs, as per the Australia's 2019-2020 Bushfires: The Wildlife Toll research report. I feel sure that this was shocking and saddening news for all residents of NSW, who lived through that event, as well as the broader Australian and international community.

It's hard to think of another event anywhere in the world in living memory that has killed or displaced that many animals. It ranks as one of the worst wildlife disasters in modern history - <https://wwf.org.au/news/2020/3-billion-animals-impacted-by-australia-bushfire-crisis/>.

It's also gut wrenching for me to accept as a citizen and a mother, that in the context of such recent devastation, the Panel would consider permitting further damage to be done needlessly to the habitat our native animals depend on for their survival. Surely, this cannot be the irresponsible and destructive legacy the Panel will allow to be handed on to our children and our future generations.

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

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I draw to the Panel's attention the fact that forests are vital refuges for many threatened species, who rely on mature, intact forests.

They provide important services for the environment and regional communities such as:

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- Water quality and flow regulation, important for water quality, fishing and tourism
  - Recreational values for locals and visitors.
  - Cultural and spiritual significance, especially, but not only, for Indigenous communities.

I'm a non-Aboriginal Australian, who is the descendant of convicts and free settlers, mainly from England. As a child, I spent a lot of time with my family in the Australian bush. I testify to the Panel to the unique spiritual quality of NSW forests, as timeless places of reflection and tranquillity for us humans.

o For me, as a non-Aboriginal resident of NSW. I don't think it's a stretch to say to the Panel that our forests are sacred, and as non-Aboriginal Australians, we have much more to learn from the First Australians, who are the traditional owners and custodians of these very special parts of our country.

- Habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity and ecosystem health.

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

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I submit to the Panel that public native forests must not be logged to build houses and instead plantations should be relied on to supply our high quality and composite timber. Shifting to plantation timber reduces pressure on native forests, supporting sustainable industry practices.

The enormous loss of tree cover caused by logging native forests also diminishes carbon storage capacity contributing to climate change, which is putting us all at increasing peril -

<https://news.mongabay.com/2023/07/timber-harvests-to-meet-global-wood-demand-will-bring-soaring-emissions-study/>.

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### **Topic 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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I understand that hardwood and softwood plantations already provide 91% of Australia's log production. I submit to the Panel that investment in hardwood plantation on already cleared land is a better way to supply timber products into the future.

Shifting to higher-value plantations can better meet timber needs and ending public forest subsidies would boost sustainable timber production on private lands.

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### **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**

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Healthy native forests provide essential water resources. Protecting and restoring State Forests will increase their economic value through tourism, carbon storage, job creation and recreational opportunities.

The Forestry Corporation does not appear to be financially sustainable with its reliance on government support and smaller timber yields compared to managed plantations. Forest management led by Aboriginal people and informed by Aboriginal knowledge and expertise would enhance the cultural and social value of forests.

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### **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**

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Logging in native forests releases large amounts of carbon, contributing to climate change. I understand that timber harvests to meet the world's soaring demand for wood products will likely

## Public submission

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account for more than 10% of total global carbon emissions over coming decades, according to a study by World Resources Institute scientists and published in Nature.

I draw to the Panel's attention that this explosion in emissions , three times those of aviation emissions , comes at a crucial time in the climate crisis when carbon discharges must drop rapidly to put a brake on rising record temperatures and reduce worsening climate catastrophes.

Stopping logging allows forests to recover, helping them store more carbon and support climate goals.

Healthy forests are essential for reducing the impacts of climate change like wildfires and drought. By stopping logging, forests can play an important role in mitigating climate risks and supporting opportunities in carbon markets.