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Submission ID: 204910

Organisation: N/A

Location: Redacted

Supporting materials uploaded: N/A

Submission date: 10/13/2024 3:14:30 PM

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

If one were to use the overall state of State Forests after almost 100 years of timber extraction and management of regrowth, then the urge to close or reduce forestry operations would not arise. It arises from an agenda - not of reform - but cessation of native forestry.

The fact that "reform" has never been an objective of ENGOs is telling. Every written constitution has the cessation of native forestry as an aim. Yet other land use activities are approached with reform as the first step. Mining, agriculture, fisheries, and construction. No one has 'cessation' as a first principle in their constitution for these activities. No activism attends the viability of sand mines for concrete production nor proposes cessation of mining when cultural values are destroyed. The reform agenda is the natural first step in ENGOs approach to all other activities other than forestry.

I strongly believe that forestry reforms still need to take place, but I think that native forest harvesting is sustainable and that sustainability measures can be improved. The best form of plantation forestry would mirror current native forest management and harvesting in many ways. It is a template for the future. I suspect forest activism would cease as soon as land ownership became private, which shows that the activity of tree harvesting does not have an ethical dimension, just a practical one.

The push for a Koala park is purely an activist tactic. It has no logical basis. No ENGO has provided funding towards koala communities dying in forests or woodlands that have no harvest agenda. (Gunnedah NSW). No one is sure whether the Chlamydia outbreaks relate to transmission by grazing stock or feral animals and no money has been allocated to this research. It is spent on enviro-legal activities and funding small local activist groups. This behaviour is pure and simple activism. Do what you need to to get the desired outcome. Get the word 'koala' mentioned 400 times in media every week. Or sugar glider or Leadbeaters possum. No one is proposing a kangaroo or emu park - because neither serves a higher activist purpose.

This decision in Victoria was driven by Labor counting inner city seats which might tip to the Greens unless they did something silly. Labor never countenanced winning Gippsland or "forestry" seats because they might have to work on fundamental appeal. This looked like a quick fix and the activist effort led a cunning Premier to think it was. Dont let the same expediency or populist thinking affect the decision in NSW