

Public submission

NAME REDACTED

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Supporting materials uploaded: *Attached overleaf*

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Submission template

The Independent Forestry Panel has been appointed to lead consultation on the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW, ahead of the NSW Government developing its Forestry Industry Action Plan. The Panel is tasked with consulting and reporting to Government on the best options to achieve the balance between sustainable supplies of timber and NSW's environmental commitments.

The Panel is seeking your views on the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW. This includes forest conservation, public and private native forestry, softwood and hardwood plantations, different land tenure and management regimes, timber supply, and non-timber forest uses such as recreation, apiculture and others.

The Panel invites written submissions from individuals and organisations on the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW. The Panel would like to hear from a broad range of stakeholders, including representatives from the timber industry, forest growers, environment groups, unions, Aboriginal communities, local government, business, related industries, tourism and scientific experts.

Please structure your submission to address any or all of the topic areas below, including if and how you think current practices can improve. Please indicate the timeframe for any suggested changes, and the implications for both industry and the environment over the next 30 years.

Topic areas to address (overleaf):

- Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW
- Environmental and cultural values of forests, including threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage values
- Demand for timber products, particularly as relates to NSW housing, construction, mining, transport and retail
- The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs
- 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
- 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.

Following this structure will help the Panel respond to some of the issues the Government has identified for inclusion in its Forestry Industry Action Plan. However, a submission that doesn't follow this structure can be uploaded to the submission portal and will also be accepted and considered by the Panel.

If your submission includes citations of evidence from published reports, please include full references for those materials.

Submission template

Your submission

1. Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW

As a professional with a degree in forest science, I believe that managing native forests for timber can be highly sustainable when conducted selectively. Such management practices play a crucial role in carbon capture and storage, which is essential for mitigating climate change (NSW Environment Protection Authority, 2020).

In my experience, selective harvesting where certain trees are removed, creates optimal conditions for natural regeneration, continuing the carbon sequestration process. Newly regrown trees absorb more carbon and provide vital habitats, including younger feed trees favoured by the iconic koala species (Australian Koala Foundation, 2021). Additionally, wildfire is a constant threat in NSW. Fire suppression since European colonisation has intensified wildfire severity. Sustainable logging reduces wildfire risks by managing forest density and fuel loads (NSW Rural Fire Service, 2019; University of Wollongong, 2020).

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

NSW forests are rich in environmental value, supporting a diverse range of flora and fauna, including many threatened species. Conserving these habitats is crucial for maintaining biodiversity. Some species depend on disturbances, such as those caused by sustainable logging, for their survival (NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, 2021).

Aboriginal communities have strong cultural connections to NSW forests, and it is essential to protect their heritage sites. Incorporating traditional Aboriginal knowledge into forest management enhances ecological outcomes and honours cultural heritage (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2020).

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

There is strong demand for timber products in NSW, particularly in housing and construction. Given my background in forest science, I recognise how urbanisation and population growth continue to fuel this demand. Timber remains one of the most renewable and sustainable building materials available (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Timber is also crucial in mining, transport, and retail, particularly for packaging and other applications. Sustainable forestry practices are essential to meet this demand without depleting resources (NSW Department of Primary Industries, 2021). Future timber production is vital for the security of NSW, especially given the closure of native timber operations in other states. As such, NSW's forests should increasingly be considered essential for securing timber resources.

4. The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs

Both softwood and hardwood plantations are integral to meeting timber supply needs. Softwood plantations are ideal for fast-growing timber, while hardwood plantations are crucial for durable timber products. This helps reduce reliance on unsustainable logging practices overseas (Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, 2020).

Private Native Forestry offers a balanced approach by allowing landowners to manage forests for timber production while preserving ecological values. Continued support for Private Native Forestry can contribute to timber supply while safeguarding biodiversity (Private Native Forestry Code of Practice, 2022).

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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

NSW's State Forests are managed for a variety of purposes, including timber production, conservation, and recreation. My professional experience indicates that these forests can effectively balance the economic benefits of timber production and tourism with vital social and environmental outcomes, such as wildlife protection and community engagement.

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

Forests hold significant potential for carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement. As the carbon markets grows, there are opportunities to monetise the carbon stored in forests, creating additional income streams while promoting conservation (CSIRO, 2022).

In my opinion, native forest management for timber remains one of the most sustainable resource strategies in NSW and should be considered vital for future resource security.

References:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022). *Timber Demand in NSW Construction and Housing*.
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (2020). *Cultural Heritage in Forest Management*.
- Australian Koala Foundation (2021). *Koala Habitat and Selective Logging*.
- CSIRO (2022). *Adapting Forestry Operations to Climate Change*.
- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (2020). *Softwood and Hardwood Plantation Strategies*.
- Forest & Wood Products Australia (2022). *Future Timber Needs in NSW*.
- NSW Department of Primary Industries (2021). *Timber Production and Sustainability*.
- NSW Environment Protection Authority (2020). *Sustainability of NSW Forests: Carbon Capture and Storage*.
- NSW Office of Environment & Heritage (2021). *Biodiversity in NSW Forests*.
- NSW Rural Fire Service (2019). *Fire Risk Management and Logging*.
- Private Native Forestry Code of Practice (2022). *Balancing Conservation and Production in Private Native Forestry*.
- University of Wollongong (2020). *Fire Suppression and the Rise in Wildfire Risks*.

After filling in this submission template, please upload the completed submission to our online submission portal, linked [here](#). When you upload your submission successfully, you will receive a confirmation email from us. If you don't receive a confirmation email, please check your Junk Email folder. If you have further issues, please email forestryiap@ipcn.nsw.gov.au for assistance.