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

-Current forestry operations are not sustainable for our wildlife. Animals die or are injured when trees are felled or when the logs are processed. If they survive, they have an increased risk of dying or suffering from starvation, predation, exposure to the elements, or from the stress of living in a destroyed or fragmented environment, or from post-harvest burning. Access to forest areas via roads and tracks also increases the risk of road accidents and spread of diseases. These impacts are real and ongoing for native wildlife where their native forest habitats are logged.

-Continued native forest logging is financially, and environmentally unsustainable.

- Financially unsustainable-Analysis by conservative Think Tank the Blueprint Institute found ending native forest logging in 2023,24 and funding transition packages for workers would have delivered taxpayers a net profit of \$45 million. Because this industry is declining it has been propped up financially by taxpayers and is therefore not financially sustainable.

- Intensive logging makes climate change worse as we lose our trees that are carbon capturers. Hence, we have seen in recent years increased flooding that detrimentally affects regional areas causing displacement and government financial support to communities. This is a substantial financial outlay that could be avoided if the government ended logging of our native forests.

-Another financial outlay is caused by breaches of logging violations by NSW Forestry Corp. NSW Forestry Corp loggers on the ground are decimating our forests at an alarming rate. They appear to act as a law to themselves with minimal scrutiny or compliance. Past breaches have resulted in fines of millions of dollars. By ending native forest logging completely this will be a savings to the government.

-Ending native forest logging in NSW is the right course to follow as a diminishing industry that is financially not viable to the NSW taxpayer. The economic impact of ceasing logging of native forests will be better financially.

- Environmentally unsustainable-Logging our native forests wastes our trees as only 8% of native forests logged become sawn timber. The other 92% currently is pulped and turned into cardboard and woodchips, with a large supply sent to overseas markets meanwhile our native animals are losing their habitat and quickly declining. We will see species extinction rapidly increase.

- Logging makes bushfires worse, by drying out forests and leaving dead debris on the ground, creating bushfires hazards.

-Destroying our old growth trees and native forests we destroy our carbon capturers- a solution to climate change. We also destroy native wildlife habitat that hastens our Koalas, Greater Gliders and many other animals on the path to extinction.

-Codes of practice for forestry operations make little mention of animal protection. Their requirements to protect animals are vague and mostly focused on threatened species, failing to recognise the suffering that can be caused to ALL animals and the potential for some species to become threatened in the long term.

-Before logging, fauna surveys are generally conducted, but these are not always mandatory and are often too constrained to detect all animals, especially those that are rare, small, roosting in

tree hollows (Greater Glider) or hiding under tree bark. Insects and other invertebrates are not even considered. This is crucial as they are a food source for many larger animals and their decrease affects the survival of other species. Animal-safe logging is impossible to conduct at a commercial scale.

-Logging destroys entire ecosystems. There are also other indirect environmental impacts. The creation of tracks and cleared areas facilitates the disruption of ecosystems and introduction of pathogens such as Phytophthora. The use of heavy machinery causes soil compaction and erosion. Logging also amplifies the risk of severe fires.

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

- Native forests have intrinsic value as complex ecosystems and must be kept intact.
- Forests provide habitat for countless species of fauna and flora.
- Forests capture and store carbon and release oxygen into the atmosphere. Forests have the ability to mitigate climate change through carbon storage. Intact forests are considered to have exceptional value and must therefore be protected.
- Forests have a central role to play in addressing our climate emergency through their capacity for carbon capture and storage. Harvested wood products lock up about 5 million tonnes of carbon annually, whereas untouched forests lock up 9 times as much. The 2022 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report contains calls for decarbonisation by capturing carbon by leaving our forests standing (not logged). Sequestering carbon should be the top-ranked reason of keeping our forests untouched.
- Native forests regulate temperature and precipitation.
- Native forests filter water and protect land from soil erosion.
- Our forests provide spaces for tourism, recreation, mindfulness, well-being and relaxation for people.

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

- The transition to a plantation-based industry is nearly complete, with around 90% of Australia's timber needs already being met by current plantations.
- The remaining 10% (Native Forest logging) can easily be satisfied by stopping the export of unprocessed plantation wood and improving the domestic management of existing plantations.
- Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported. This is not sustainable.
- Hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips which is much more sustainable than using native forests. Plantation forests can be increased on already cleared land in NSW and they grow much quicker.
- Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses identified in this section- housing, construction, mining, transport and retail.
- Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods.
- The market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests is just one example.

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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- Plantation forests already provide 90% of NSW timber production and logging jobs. Taking timber from native forests is heavily subsidised by the taxpayer and has cost \$29 million more to cut down native forests supporting only 10% of the logging workforce. This is not financially viable. Data from 2022 says that it costs the taxpayer \$9 million a year and with rising costs would likely be more now. We have a right to question how our money is spent.
 - A higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations should be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips.
 - Subsidising the logging of public native forests by Forestry Corporation is non-competitive and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry.
 - High-end and luxury native hardwood products should only be selectively harvested on private land and under strict conditions.

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

- Native forests that are not logged have real and tangible benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW.
- Native state forests cover an area of 2 million hectares in NSW and impact on a diverse set of living conditions for many towns, from water quality in reservoirs, to greater tourism industry opportunities, and carbon storage and abatement.
- The native forest hardwood division of the Forestry Corporation operates at a loss that runs into tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of the NSW public. It also additionally receives tens of millions of dollars in regular equity injections.
- The people of NSW should not be paying millions of dollars to destroy the biodiversity of our own state and critical habitat for threatened species. The NSW community want to protect our native wildlife.
- Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging.
- First Nations Ranger Programs have been hugely successful at managing the recovery and health of native forests. Programs like the Githabul Rangers have shown how First Nations knowledge and management can restore the natural and critical function of forests in the landscape. This is a successful model that could be replicated and adopted by other Indigenous People in the different regions of NSW to restore other native forests.

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

- Native forest logging in NSW is estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year that contributes to global heating and affects further afield other animals and communities and nearby island nations.
- Ending native forest logging would be the equivalent to removing 840 thousand cars from the roads per year. It also allows previously logged forests to regain lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our emissions targets. It helps forests to recover, to store even more carbon and support climate goals. This will produce positive ongoing benefits for the environment, wildlife and people.
- Logging in a native forest reduces the amount of stored carbon by more than half of the original value.

- Climate change is driving increased risks for forest health and continued logging in native forests is exacerbating that risk. Forests are essential to reducing the impacts of catastrophic climate events like bushfires and drought that affects wildlife and communities.

- Forests that have not been logged are more resilient to the changing climate and catastrophic fires that are occurring as a consequence.

It is time to end all logging in all native forests in NSW. Of immediate concern is the intensive logging that is occurring within the proposed boundaries of the Great Koala National Park. This national park must be created and protected NOW. Protection of this area is critical to ensure the survival of koalas in the wild.

One fifth of NSW's koalas live within the 175,000ha of state forests that constitute this park, less than one percent of our state. Instead of protecting this critical forest, this area has continued to be extensively logged by NSW Forestry Corporation who have decimated key koala habitat that should have been protected. This addition of 175,000 hectares to existing protected areas would create a total 315,000 hectares reserve on the mid north coast of NSW.

This park has been decades in the making, with leading scientists, ecologists and environmental groups all agreeing that the protection of this area is critical to ensure the survival of koalas in the wild.

The creation of the Great Koala National Park was promised by the NSW government who have delayed on this promise for over 18 months.

The reason for this delay is quite concerning as a new analysis shows that Forestry Corporation's harvest plan lists 19,000 hectares of forest within the proposed Great Koala National Park already at risk from logging this year alone.

Forest population dynamics experts Dr Andrew Smith and John Pile confirmed what ecological experts, citizen scientists and koala carers have long understood - koala populations need abundant, mature and diverse forest habitat to thrive. Koala communities occur where breeding females have access to varied and abundant, lush green foliage. They thrive only in mature canopy, and this is currently being destroyed by Forestry Corp supported by the NSW government.

The NSW government's decision to ban logging within koala hubs still left over 90% of the park open to logging. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] NSW Forestry Corp's actions are disappointing.

Our taxpayer money is footing the bill to keep 'these' workers in a job. The community are treated with contempt, simply because we care about our native wildlife and want them protected.

Vested interests and lobbyists are determined to ensure that nothing really changes, and native forest logging continues. The community want and continue to demand an end to native forest logging. It is not financially or environmentally sustainable. Transitioning workers in Forestry Corp across to an expanding plantation industry is the future as it will save nature and the taxpayer money.

The GKNP MUST be created now. It is unconscionable to delay an end to all native forest logging so carbon and biodiversity markets can be explored. It is also unconscionable not to protect publicly owned state forests that makes a genuine contribution to greenhouse gas reduction. It is time to follow other states like Victoria, WA, and South Australia and transition completely away from all native forest logging in NSW.