

Public submission

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Your submission

1. Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW

I would like to break this question into two parts and answer both independently. As far as the production of timber products in NSW, it is my opinion that at this point in time, I don't believe that the industry is sustainable. This is due in most part because of unrealistic wood supply obligations and the underutilisation of the full potential of harvested trees in a shrinking State Forest estate. The growth of trees for producing high value timber products is intergenerational. We should be more receptive about ideas to maximise the use of the timber produced to its full potential. In a state where this can occur, we will have a sustainable timber industry.

Forestry operations must also include the maintenance of the roading network and the management of fire within the State Forest estate. There is approximately 60,00km of roads within State Forest. The management of this roading network is in the most part underfunded. This roading network is integral in providing access for the public and to provide essential access for fire response and management. The management of fire in State Forest is extremely important for forest health and the reduction of forest fuel loads. This area of forest operations in my opinion is adequately funded, however, the level of red tape has a negative impact on the diligent use of fire where the window to burn safely is reduced due to changes in climate.

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

The focus on environmental values of our forests has never been as emotive as now. Some of the first environmentalists were the Foresters resulting in the inception of the Forestry Commission in 1916. This was an attempt at controlling the wholesale destruction of the NSW public forests. If it wasn't for these Foresters, there wouldn't be some of the reserves set aside to preserve the environment we have to this day. Of the 2m ha of State Forest there is 1m ha in a reserve system held in perpetuity. The managers of our State Forests have over the years, and to this day contribute extensively to the ongoing research, monitoring and preservation of threatened species. One example of this involvement in threatened species are recent peer reviewed and published papers pertaining to the Koala and how there is minimal evidence that there is a negative impact on the species as a direct result of harvesting trees in native forest. Unfortunately, this research doesn't fit the narrative of the population who preach doom and gloom via all forms of media that the species is destined for extinction by 2050 because of cutting down trees on the State Forest estate. This emotive preaching is clearly not supported by extensive evidence-based science. I don't think there has ever been any credible evidence in NSW forest management that a species has been made extinct as a direct result of timber harvesting. On the contrary, forest managers have found species that were deemed extinct. An example being *Euphrasia arguta*. NSW has some of the best forest management practise regarding the mitigation of negative environmental outcomes in the world. Unfortunately for

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native forest harvesting, visually it doesn't look good. You need to break an egg to bake a cake though.

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

The demand for timber products worldwide is forecast to quadruple by 2050 based on a report by Dr Lyndel Bull of the UN FAO. In NSW the need for housing is increasing at a rate unseen before. Timber can play an integral roll in this housing crisis. We should be sourcing all our timber requirements domestically rather than importing timber from countries that have far less stringent environmental regulation than Australia. There is a whole lot of associated industry that will be affected in the event of the timber industry in NSW being closed. All these people pay taxes so that we can enjoy the lifestyle that we enjoy today. In a cost of living crisis I don't think this is a smart move for the state to put a wholesale closure on an industry that has so much potential to answer some of the challenges the state has.

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

I don't think the current plantation estate is the answer to the whole supply issue. Unless there is more plantation estate established there will be a shortfall in supply. Continued ecologically sustainable forest management for the supply of timber products from our state forests is the only way to make up this shortfall. Importing timber from overseas is not ethically or morally acceptable when we have our own supply of superior hardwoods. I would argue what the continuation of private native forestry would be the next to fall if there was an end to harvesting on public state forest. The harvesting of timber on private land is currently under less scrutiny than that of public land. Once there is an end to harvesting on public land, I feel there will be an increase on the need to supply some of the shortfall from private land. There will be an increase in negative environmental outcomes as a result due to this lack of scrutiny and a ruleset that is less stringent than that placed on native harvesting on public land.

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

The role of state forests in answering this question has already been demonstrated in the successful management of the states forests thus far. Unfortunately, the politics and politicians of the day have made it their mission to appease the voice of a minority that are hell bent on the destruction of a renewable resource industry that can provide such much positive benefit to the state. Foresters study the management of our forests and all its values. They spend their careers

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trying to achieve the best management outcomes for those forests only to have politicians who know very little if anything about forest management make decisions that are mostly at odds with sound forest management.

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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