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

Forestry NSW relies on the physical growth and maturity of suitable trees for harvest, but the natural capital of forests will now be controlled by the influence and effects of Climate Change on the forest regions.

Forests need to be nurtured. Plantation forests, both hardwoods & softwoods can be encouraged, but care needs to be taken on where these can be sited, as, with all changes, there can be negative consequences for biodiversity and habitats.

There has been too much abuse of the regulations by Forestry NSW

Current practices of forestry employees and contractors for 'accidentally damaging old trees with hollows' (den or habitat trees), of logging closer than 50 metre limits, of clearing ridges or slopes of 30 degrees and exclusion zones near creeks has negatively affected public opinion of towns near logging coupes. The result is a loss of respect for the native forest timber industry.

Research has shown that clear felling is poor forestry practice and is highly detrimental to soil, fungi, flora and fauna and water retention.

Native Forest logging has been highly damaging to the biodiversity of every coupe.

For too long there has been an over commitment for contracts leading to over-logging. Tree growth is limited to environmental influences, not by promises and economics.

Geo surveillance of every proposed logging coupe, with continuous surveillance throughout should be mandatory in NSW, as well as every other state so see that activities meet regulations & standards.

Any breaches need to be treated far more seriously, including much higher fines, de-licensing any contractor and stopping operations of Forestry NSW for longer periods than are currently used.

The environment is too valuable to be treated with disrespect.

A positive outcome would be far greater investment in improved observational technology (e.g. drones) statewide to efficiently detect lightning strikes or deliberate or accidental outbreaks of fire, and have fast, effective aerial water bomber fleets to extinguish them.

There needs to be a thorough, honest review of the Regional Forestry Agreement, including full transparency; have regular reports published and available to all; have immediate and thorough reporting of accidents & breaches; cancellation of the exception from State or Federal biodiversity regulations; have regular publication of names of lobbyists; to trebling the time before a politician can take up any position that is related to the timber industry; and to have strict adherence to all regulations relating to forestry.

Preferably, Regional Forest Agreements should be abolished. They have proved very costly in subsidies and fines for taxpayers since their introduction.

A positive move would be for Government support for forestry workers and businesses directly involved with harvesting native forests to transition to stewardship of forests in various ways.

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

No pollinators, no forests, no diversity, no us!

If we lose our environment, humans will have lost their way, as they are only one small part of the web of life, not the centre of it.

Australia had extensive diverse forests, which varied with the physiography of the land.

Through European arrival with its land clearing policies to make way for agricultural expansion and ensuing population growth, the forests have been extensively reduced.

A serious consequence is the loss of habitat of so many of our tree reliant creatures, plus the food and homes they rely on, destroying their ecosystems.

As a wildlife rescuer & carer, every species that comes into care has 'habitat loss' listed as a threat to its continued existence. This is a shameful acknowledgement of how little governments have done for generations & continue to do for protecting native habitats and everything that the inhabitants rely on to survive. There is about 1,000 native animals, plants & ecological communities at risk of being lost forever. (environment.nsw.gov.au Saving our species programme).

Greater funding is needed to support the survival of every species, not only the 'iconic' ones. It is extremely important that the remaining forests are protected, so every creature, fungi, microbe, plant and tree remains undamaged by heavy machinery, compaction, clear felling, and including dehydration, flooding, bushfires that are being experienced more often with climate change occurring.

Cleverer methods of sustainable, selective harvesting (not salvage harvesting after fires, or 'forest gardening') should be carried out, with least damage to ecosystems.

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

Engage aboriginal groups to manage and train others to carry out the ancient methods of cool, controlled burning. The current accepted practice of hazard reduction burns are often limited by waiting for suitable windows in the weather, & often get out of control from the high intensity burning, with unplanned disastrous results, along with the consequential unhealthy smoke haze that is created.

Extend these programmes to involve interested citizens to participate, to develop a more responsible attitude and provide a sense of ownership.

Increase funding to build and manage extensive feral proofed areas to protect native wildlife in every state forest, at least.

Carry out controlled extermination of cats and foxes, deer & wild pigs that damage the environment. Stop the use of poison bait that causes so much secondary poisoning to native carnivores and the raptors, that upsets the natural predation cycle by native animals.

Encourage citizen scientists to participate in observing and recording flora and fauna for iNaturalist in all state forests.

Develop a greater link between Landcare and looking after forests.

Enable public activity in limited, controlled areas of state forests, avoiding possible detrimental effects on native animal access routes and ecosystems