

NIK MIDLAM

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

Native forest logging in NSW is unsustainable due to its impact on biodiversity and ecosystems. Logging disrupts habitats, threatening endangered species and reducing biodiversity. The process also releases stored carbon, contributing to climate change. Unlike plantations, native forests take centuries to recover. For true sustainability, shifting to plantation-based forestry is critical, ensuring timber supply without compromising natural heritage.

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

Having witnessed Private Native Forestry in action I can attest that there is very little NSW Government oversight. Approvals are granted based on out of date remote sensing. They have no idea what animals and vegetation may be present and approvals are certainly granted in koala habitat for example. There should be an immediate moratorium on Private Native Forestry (which is not plantation) subject to a thorough review of the practices. Approvals should only be granted subject to site visit by qualified ecologists to ensure logging only occurs in areas without threatened or vulnerable species.

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

The NSW Government should provide programs and funding for Aboriginal practitioners to maintain public natives forests with cool burn, cultural fire practices. These take place in the cooler months and as well as improving cultural connection, forest health, and improved biodiversity, can significantly reduce the risk of uncontrolled bushfires in the warmer seasons. There are so many good reasons, including avoided carbon to the atmosphere from hot bushfires, that this absolutely should be a NSW Government priority to remove the barriers, and to provide ongoing funding and certainty that these practices can occur when they need to in accordance with seasonal calendars.

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 is simply incompatible with reducing emissions and the NSW Government net zero and emissions reduction targets. It also exacerbates extinctions and threatened species. The NSW Government may potentially recoup funding by selling the biodiversity credits, however there is ample evidence that scheme needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is functioning as intended.