

PATRICIA SAUNDERS

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**Organisation:** N/A

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**Location:** Australian Capital Territory

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** N/A

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

NSW native forests are a diminishing, non-renewable resource. NSW Forestry operations are destroying and permanently damaging our native forests, consistently operate at a loss, are heavily subsidised by the NSW government/taxpayer, are leading to the extinction of species such as the koala and greater glider and are not sustainable now or into the future.

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

In an era of rapidly increasing global warming, NSW native forests play a critical role in carbon storage, in providing an expanding human population with a clean and reliable water supply and in providing critical habitat for iconic, threatened wildlife including the koala and the greater glider.

Native forests are also an important recreational resource, supporting community physical and mental well-being.

Having worked extensively with Aboriginal communities conducting cultural heritage surveys in NSW native forests, including for example, the Sydney Water Catchment Area on the Wollongong Plateau, I am aware that native forests contain a wide range of archaeological sites of high cultural and spiritual significance to Traditional Custodians and also embody significant non-tangible and spiritual values that must be protected.

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-recreation and spiritual connection.

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providing recreation, spiritual connection

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

Current and future demand for timber products in NSW can be met by a well-managed, innovative, sustainable plantation-based timber industry.

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

Sustainable softwood and hardwood plantations are critical in helping meet present and future timber supply needs. Private Native Forestry is not sustainable long-term and should be phased out.

Future timber supply needs are likely to diminish in time as new, engineered and potentially cheaper construction materials become available.

**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**

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State Forests could maximise the delivery of environmental, economic and social outcomes by adopting a NSW National Parks model of managing its forests. Sustainable native forest management by State Forests should include Aboriginal forest management models. Aboriginal Ranger programs in northern Australia and the active participation of local Aboriginal communities in the management of Bush Heritage Australia properties are good examples.

**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**

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Given the inadequacy of our political response to the threat of climate change, our mature native forests, acting as carbon sinks, are currently our best form of climate change mitigation and native forest logging must cease immediately.

Regarding a market-based approach to native forest management, carbon credits, as currently designed and operating, are easily gamed and sham carbon offsets are common. A more innovative approach is needed.

Climate change is also a major risk to forests, as evidenced by the devastating 2019-20 east coast bushfires with the death of an estimated three billion creatures and the ongoing slow death of irreplaceable mature trees in our wet tropics.

I am not qualified to comment further on point 6.