

ROBERT PARKINSON

Submission ID: 202811

Organisation: N/A

Location: New South Wales

Supporting materials uploaded: N/A

Submission date: 10/6/2024 9:47:02 AM

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

Current forestry operations in NSW seem designed to ensure that native forestry will soon be brought to an end. The failure by Forestry Corporation to adequately protect the flora and fauna living in forests, as they are supposed to, is a symptom of an industry which has no right to continue. The clear felling of forest sections by Forestry Corporation would best be described as criminal destruction of valuable public assets.

Every day I receive emails from nature advocates, urging me to add my voice to the call to end native logging. To quote a recent email 'Logging cannot continue in public native forests without pushing the Koala, Greater Glider, Coastal Emu and many more forest-dependent wildlife much further towards extinction.'

Meanwhile at Forestry Corporation NSW website I read that 'Koalas are a priority for protection and there are specific measures to manage koalas detailed in harvest plans. These include permanent retention of habitat along riparian corridors and around the plantation area as well as temporary exclusions that are put in place within the plantation area of a koala is sighted. Timber harvesting crews are provided training in koala search and identification and maintain constant vigilance.'

It seems, from all I have read, that Forestry Corporation is either a best-practice forestry operator, or a criminal outfit destroying nature.

I cannot help but think that neither the "end native logging" campaign, nor the "clear-fell the forests, and damn the consequences" approach, are what we really need in NSW.

If Forestry Corporation cannot operate in the careful, sustainable way they claim to operate, then yes they should be expelled from the industry.

But none of what I have just written, and referred to, negates the fact that native forest logging could be done in a way which is sustainable. If we as a state chose to, we could, using the wealth of knowledge that does exist about how to sustainably manage forests, implement a system of forestry which would ensure a long future for what is actually a renewable resource.

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

Forests are valuable for many well documented reasons. Sustainable forestry requires the input of many diverse interests. Forestry Corporation are aware of this, and claim to uphold such values. If they "keep their word", they should be allowed to continue. If as it appears they have no real interest in the values they claim to uphold and protect, they should not exist.

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

~35,000 hectares of plantation hardwood in NSW is not sufficient. We need to get many more trees planted. We have the space to do this. On a recent drive from Wollombi to Broke, one very noticeable feature of the landscape was the carpet of Fireweed covering many small properties. If I were the ruler of NSW I would seize these neglected lands and plant forests on them.

It is commonplace for new houses in NSW to feature the hardwood known as Merbau, or Kwila. The way this timber is procured from areas of SE Asia such as PNG, is destructive and criminal, and even more alarming than the activity of Forestry Corporation in NSW.

I have no desire to support the destruction of forests in neighbouring nations, yet the practices of Forestry Corporation, which will ensure that operator's own demise, mean that SE Asian hardwood will continue to flood our market. The non-compromising position of advocates such as Nature Conservation Council NSW, to end native forest logging, will ensure the same dire outcome.

We need a leader to step up and end this forest "war", and take us forward to having a sustainable forestry in NSW.

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

Government support eg subsidy is needed to encourage private forestry. It is obvious that without subsidy, there are insufficient land owners prepared to consign land to a use which makes no financial return for decades.

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

Their role in all this should be to offer expertise where they can, and to incorporate the expertise of other agents into the management of forests. If Forestry Corporation were really as benevolent as their literature suggests, then positive environmental and economic outcomes would be assured.

First nations of NSW have extremely long histories of forest management. Aboriginal forest management should be right at the heart of forestry. Too long have these voices been ignored. We have very large areas of forest in NSW, which all need good management. This will require many people to be involved. Currently our human population is nearly all located in urban centres. When will we get political leadership in this state, such that people are given incentive to live away from cities, in forested regions, and be able to make their living as part of sustainable forestry and forest management?

As someone who worked as a Bushland Regenerator for many years, I would also like to add that workers will need to be properly paid for the important work of looking after our forests. The low pay, and casual status of workers, which are currently typical of conservation work, is disincentivising, and gives the impression that looking after nature is not something we as a society value.

The future I wish to see includes:

- a large, well-paid, expert workforce, dedicated to the protection of forests, the prevention of wildfire, and the responsible extraction of valuable timber;
- every hectare of forest intensively managed eg flora and fauna properly surveyed, and protected, "cool fire" used extensively, led by Aboriginal expertise;
- the flourishing of the timber industry, proudly providing, and adding great value to our fine hardwoods, so that lovers and users of our woods, such as myself, may continue to do so.

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

I see carbon and biodiversity benefits as bi-products of sustainable forestry. Forests are extremely valuable, precisely because they provide so many benefits. Forests provide carbon capture as they grow, and carbon storage while they remain. Conversely, the destruction of a forest by fire is the worst carbon outcome possible.

The nature advocates, who ask me to support the campaign to end native forest logging, are almost silent about the real problem of "locking up" forests for the benefit of biodiversity, in the absence of adequate management to prevent wildfire. An un-thinned, un-cared for forest is more likely to burn to nothing than to provide sought after habitat trees.

If forestry were guided by the combined expertise of skilled foresters, timber processors, First Nations people, and ecologists, it would be possible to achieve desirable carbon and biodiversity outcomes and extract valuable timber.