

Public submission

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To the Independent Forestry Panel Secretariat,

Thank you for giving the wider community a chance to make our voices heard on the issue of native forest logging.

I ask for an end to native forest logging entirely. Our future must be based instead on sustainable plantations.

I write to you not just on my own behalf but also on behalf of everyone who currently enjoys study, recreation and spiritual fulfilment of and from Australia's native forests. More importantly, I write on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves: I write for the endangered native animals for whom our native forests are a rare and precious safe habitat, and I write for unborn future generations who, if unsustainable logging practices are allowed to continue, will never experience the joys we currently get from our native forests.

My first reason is the prevention of climate change. Healthy native forests represent a bastion for mitigating the effects of climate change, such as wildfires and drought. Logging native forests has the opposite effect; it releases large amounts of carbon, which contributes to climate change. According to the United Nations Environment Program, conserving and restoring natural environments can provide over 1/3rd of the cost-effective climate mitigation needed between now and 2030 to stabilise climate warming to below 2°C. Therefore, if we as a society are to mitigate climate change and protect our planet's natural beauty (not to mention its liveability) for generations to come, we need to end native forest logging now.

Another reason why native forest logging is unsustainable is in its contribution to native wildlife extinction. The 2022 IUCN Red List ranked Australia 4th in the world for the highest number of animal extinctions. This statistic is and should be a source of shame for the whole country. Endangered species such as the greater glider, koala, and spotted-tailed quoll are all dependent on native forests for survival. By logging native forests, we destroy this precious habitat and drive dozens of endangered native species closer towards extinction. Native forest logging is thus not only unsustainable but also unethical.

My third and final reason I plead for an end to native forest logging is more personal. I am one of countless people - Australians and visitors alike - who find joy, enrichment, and emotional fulfilment from outdoor recreation in Australia's native forests. This community, especially the tourists among us, represents a lucrative source of income for Australia for as long as the native forests still exist to draw people in. The sight of an old, established, healthy forest gives me and countless others a sense of awe, wonder, and belonging. It represents a crucial benefit to public mental and emotional health which cannot be replicated by the much sadder sight of new plantations trying to grow amidst the barren landscape of logged trees.

Seeing our land as it is meant to be gives me a sense of spiritual connection and reassurance, no matter what else I may be going through in my life. Sharing this sentiment with other outdoor recreators, trail runners and hikers gives me a sense of community and social well-being as

well. Logging native forests, therefore, will also destroy the emotional and social health of everyone who relies on their enjoyment of nature for a source of those things, on both an individual and a community level.

To summarise, it is in the interests of the climate, of our native wildlife, and of public mental health to end native forest logging. I fully support an end to the practice, and I hope the FIAP will make the right choices when acting on the matter.

Kind regards,

Julia Murphy.