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Submission ID: 203024

Organisation: N/A

Location: New South Wales

Supporting materials uploaded: N/A

Submission date: 10/7/2024 3:20:05 PM

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

There are many reasons that we shouldn't continue with Native forest logging in NSW.

I believe that native forest logging is unsustainable. Estimations by the Forestry Corporation of the amount of harvestable timber are consistently over estimated and the yield from public native forests has declined by 40% since 2010.

I understand that protections for mature trees were removed in 2018 and that logging was then intensified to try and harvest more wood from native forests.

Logging of native forests reduces biomass and carbon storage, and removing mature trees takes away valuable food sources and hollow, bearing trees. 174 species in NSW rely on hollows for dens and nests, logging reduces the number of hollows that will be created in native forests.

Native forest logging also significantly increases fire threat and intensity, erosion and water way pollution, and facilitates the penetration of weeds and other invasive species.

Native forest logging also reduces the function and health of waterways, including streams and rivers.

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

Firstly, healthy and unlogged forests are critical to the whole environment and to the health and well-being of both our First Nations and non-First Nations culture and identity. Native forests in NSW hold significant cultural and spiritual value for First Nations people and communities who have ongoing connection to native forests and forest landscapes and consider these an integral part of cultural practice and knowledge.

Forests, particularly healthy mature forests, are vital as they generate rainfall, cool the landscape and clean the air and in an effort to mitigate against global warming and climate change, we need to ensure we do all we can to help cool our local climate. Native forests are essential in this way. Including our iconic Koalas, there are at least 150 threatened species in NSW directly impacted by logging native forests. This is massively important. We are in the midst of the 6th great extinction event (Holocene) and Australia has arguably the worst record for native species extinction rates in the world. We need to make a much stronger commitment to protecting our biodiversity. THIS IS WHAT THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WANT!

Mature and unlogged native forests are critical for pollinators and play a key role in pollination across the landscape, both inside and outside of forests. With pollinators struggling against excessive use of pesticides worldwide, we need to do everything we can to ensure bountiful, pesticide free pollination opportunities.

Native forests provide recreation and improved health outcomes to locals and visitors alike and are a source of community pride and connection to place. There are 269 nationally listed threatened species in NSW and the landscape scale significance of native forests means that native forest logging compromises many ecosystems and habitats throughout NSW.

There is massive tourist potential with intact and venerated native forests - our logging industry has access to ample farmed timber ... it's time to listen to the voice of the people and put an end to Native Forest logging.

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

Logging in native forests accounted for only 9% of the total log production in Australia in the year 2023 and native forest logging contributed only 2.4 million of the total 25 million cubic metres for that year. Half of the logs taken from native forests in 2023 were turned into woodchip and exported. This is an absolute tragedy and does nothing for our country but destroy and sell-off our mature native forest to be chipped, sent overseas and pulped and then made into low value products. It is a reprehensible activity and should be stopped immediately.

Hardwood logs taken from plantations made up 8.5 million cubic metres, and just 8% of these logs were saw and veneer logs. 87% of hardwood plantation logs were exported as wood chips. Again - this is an appalling use of our precious native hardwoods.

Hardwood sourced from native forests or plantations are no longer necessary for any of the uses outlined above. Sawn and treated softwood logs and composite timber products made from softwoods can substitute for all current uses for native forest and plantation hardwoods.

The market and demand for native forests is declining rapidly, the recent example of Essential Energy moving away from power poles harvested from native forests is just one example.

I urge the NSW State Govt to please follow the examples of Western Australia, South Australia and Victoria and cease all native logging in the state, focusing instead on farmed timber harvesting.

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

Plantation timber currently already provides 91% of Australia's log production.

It would be sensible for a higher proportion of harvested logs from plantations to be prioritised as saw and veneer logs, rather than exporting them as wood chips.

Subsidising the logging of public native forests by the Forestry Corporation is non-competitive and distorts the market away from the more profitable softwood plantation industry. Forestry Corp is running at a loss and our state government is having to pick up the pieces and subsidise the company using public money.

Since 2019/20, Forestry Corp have received subsidies of approximately \$270 million of public money for them to conduct their native forest harvesting activities.

High-end and luxury native hardwood products should only be selectively harvested on private land and under strict conditions.

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

Native forests that are not logged have real and tangible benefits to the entire ecology and economy of NSW. Native state forests cover an area of 2 million hectares in NSW and impact on a diverse set of living conditions for many towns, from water quality in reservoirs, to greater tourism industry opportunities, and carbon storage and abatement.

The native forest hardwood division of the Forestry Corporation operates at a loss that runs into tens of millions of dollars, at the expense of the NSW public. It also additionally receives tens of millions of dollars in regular equity injections. The people of NSW should not be paying millions of

dollars to destroy the biodiversity of our own state and critical habitat for threatened species. This is critical and needs to be addressed.

Public native forests have a much higher economic value when they are allowed to function naturally and without logging, including the possibility of developing and expanding a potentially lucrative eco-tourism industry.

First Nations Ranger Programs have been hugely successful at managing the recovery and health of native forests. Programs like the Githabul Rangers have shown how First Nations knowledge and management can restore the natural and critical function of forests in the landscape.

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

There are significant carbon emissions to be considered. Native forest logging in NSW is estimated to release 3.6 million tonnes of carbon every year and ending of native forest logging would be the equivalent to removing 840 thousand cars from the roads per year. This is significant and should not be overlooked.

Logging in a native forest is reputed to reduce the amount of stored carbon by more than half of the original value and therefore, ending native forest logging will allow previously logged forests to regain lost carbon and make a significant contribution to meeting our emissions targets.

Climate change is driving increased risks for forest health and continued logging in native forests is exacerbating that risk. Forests that have not been logged have proven to be more resilient to the changing climate and catastrophic fires that are occurring as a consequence.

In conclusion, it is time. Please show real leadership here and put an end to the costly and highly destructive practice of native forest logging in NSW.

Thank you for your consideration,

Cr Simon Chate,