

NAME REDACTED

Submission ID: 204992

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**Organisation:** *South Coast Timber*

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**Location:** *Victoria*

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *N/A*

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Submission date: 10/13/2024 4:42:02 PM

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

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I don't feel I am in a position to discuss the sustainability of current forestry operations in NSW as a whole, but will instead focus on Southcoast Timber's current and future forestry plan . We have taken a slightly different approach at South Coast Timber, we call it Ecological Sustainable Forest Management (ESFM). ESFM focuses on protecting Bio-Diversity and mitigating catastrophic fire, two things a forest must achieve to be healthy and vibrant and to withstand the challenges of a changing environment. ESFM focusses on leaving the smallest possible footprint during operations, we selectively harvest across all species, trees are chosen based on canopy reduction and forest health not on the saleability of a certain species. This helps protect the balance of bio-diversity in the forest and stops high grading of forests. The challenge falls to the industry to find value add markets for all species of timber so that a more balanced approach is taken to harvesting. The operation should also be conducted with wild life in mind, wild life corridors should be designed into the harvest plan. The ultimate aim of this methodology is to enhance Bio-diversity (via inclusion of wild life corridors and practicing non single species selective harvesting), mitigate catastrophic fire risk, and creation of a multi generational forest. Forest residue is collected during the job leaving enough behind for a cool burn. The residue is then chipped/mulched on site, eventually this will be transported to a central facility to be used in the production of Biochar (we will discuss this further below) The end result is what has been described as a "mosaic managed woodland" that leaves both the forest and wild life thriving. We have been carrying out this methodology for two years now and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further as well as offering the opportunity to view the results of the work already completed. Local Land Services and the EPA have accepted this offer and are supporters of this methodology. We also consulted with the Eden Aboriginal Land Council in the creation of this methodology and will continue to engage with them as we progress.

One final point, we focus a lot on fire mitigation as it is not just its immediate effect on forests and wildlife that are concerning, but ask yourself how much carbon is released into the atmosphere during a fire as intense as the 2019/20 fires? Therefore any future forestry policy should have a strong focus on catastrophic fire mitigation

I would be happy to discuss these concepts with you further if given the opportunity.

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

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Demand for timber products will always exist, in fact we are seeing some European countries returning to timber as a healthy and sustainable material to build with. Australia seems to be heading in the opposite direction which is strange considering the size of the timber resource we have at our disposal. We are now seeing commercial buildings such as warehouses being built out of laminated timber. These are just a couple of signs to show that we should be embracing our timber resource, sustainably managing it so that it can take us into the future whilst at the same remaining healthy and vibrant and absorbing carbon. It is imperative that we find a balance between forest health and demand for timber. If we can achieve this then we have effectively

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turned the timber industry in to the tool that will be used to manage and sustain our forests into the future whilst at the same time providing a valuable resource to our economy.

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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**

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We think there is a definite role for plantations in forestry however once again they need to be managed correctly in conjunction with a clear long term strategy.

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**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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I believe there is a strong role for FCNSW to drive outcomes in all the areas listed above. Goals in these areas might be more achievable were FCNSW to be absorbed back into government, this might reduce the focus on profitability and allow Forestry to effect more meaningful change in these areas.

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**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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There are many opportunities within the forestry industry for a sustainable carbon/biochar industry to exist. The area that we have been developing is collection of residue from the forest floor during forest management operations. This material has been left in the forest in the past for various reasons. We believe it is a productive way to take a fire hazard and an eyesore and turn it into a valuable resource that can be used to assist in soil restoration via fertilisers or if used in stock feed may reduce the amount of methane expelled from animals. These are just two of the multitudes of uses for Biochar/Biofuel.

There are many opportunities arising in the carbon credit areas and I think it is important that a clear strategy is set in place with regards to carbon credits from forestry. For instance, does a thriving forest that has been managed sustainably absorb more carbon than a mature forest that is locked up and experiencing minimal growth? We should be clear on the answer to this question before we allow any more land to be locked up for carbon credits. If the thriving forest absorbs more carbon then surely we shouldn't allow mature forests to be locked up as this will not achieve the ultimate goal of carbon absorption. We should instead be looking at setting up a system that encourages sustainable forest management followed by a period of "locking up" for carbon credits, that would align with the timetable of forest management for that for that particular forest or area. This would set up a system of scheduled forest management that would achieve the best outcomes for the Forest, Wildlife, Industry and carbon absorption. I would look forward to discussing this further if given the opportunity.