

STANLEY BOLDEN

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

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How can Forestry Corporation even pretend that Native Forest Logging is sustainable when it continues to destroy and vandalise what little healthy habitat for threatened and endangered species still remain in our increasingly fragile and degraded natural environment?. Particularly when Native Forest is largely trashed for woodchips and paper pulp and not processed for high-end timber products?

How can Native Forest Logging be considered sustainable when it requires ongoing injections of millions of taxpayer dollars whilst in-depth and expert analysis state that it offers 'poor financial returns to NSW taxpayers' (Frontier Economics May 2023)?

Native Forest Logging is not sustainable because NSW now has 229 species listed as threatened or endangered with loss of habitat the main cause cited. Native Forest Logging is not sustainable because regrowth after logging is not equivalent to the complex multi-story, multi-age and multi-species habitat of an untouched forest.

Native Forest Logging is not sustainable as logging and/or thinning of complex undamaged forests allows for weed incursion which again alters the forest structure.

Native Forest Logging is not sustainable because the majority of native species have evolved requiring tree hollows with some species requiring multiple hollows within their territories.

Native Forest Logging, even if leaving some hollow bearing trees within an exclusion zone, still impacts on upcoming trees that may bear hollows into the future with trees typically needing one hundred years of growth to form useful hollows.

Native forest Logging is not sustainable because displaced native animals are more vulnerable to heat stress, to starvation, to territorial disputes, to missing important breeding windows, and to adverse collisions with humans such as car strikes and pet attacks.

Native Forest Logging is not sustainable because of its impact on water quality in streams and rivers, with increased siltation, and erosion.

Native Forest Logging is not sustainable because Forestry Corporation has a repeated history of breaching what few protective regulations exist, culminating in multiple convictions in the Land and Environment Court and million plus fines which presumably taxpayers fund. Native Forest Logging is not sustainable as there seems to be little promise of Forestry Corporation not continuing to offend when no individuals or management are held truly responsible.

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

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In Australia and NSW in particular we are facing an extinction crisis of so many iconic and unique animals, for example, the koala, the powerful owl, the squirrel glider, the quoll, the greater glider etc etc There is no argument that what is driving this extinction crisis is destruction of native forests. If we Australians are to have any hope of seeing these animals, or even knowing of their existence, outside of zoos or as taxidermized specimens in museums, native forests need to be preserved and enhanced, not destroyed.

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The Koala is world famous and brings in billions of dollars of tourist income. Its predicted extinction in the wild because of neglect and aggressive forest clearing, again for such low end products as wood chips and paper pulp, is ludicrous and shameful. Its extinction, along with other iconic native animals will bring a great sense of loss and grief not only to Australians but the wider world population. These animals and forests are not ours to thoughtlessly destroy. Aboriginal people have long held native forests as places of spiritual importance and their knowledge of foods, medicines and cool burns has been ignored and discounted for far too long. Australia was not terra nullius when colonisation occurred, and our native forests are not terra nullius now but occupied by a rich diversity of animals and birds that have evolved on this island state over millions of years.

In this time of increasing human induced climate change, native forests are also important as carbon sinks. Industrial level clearing, wood chipping and pulping all high emitters of carbon and have no place in this time.

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

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Native forest logging, involving the destruction of critically important remnant habitat for so many threatened and endangered species, largely results in large volume, low value end-products of woodchips and paper pulp. The irony is stark high value rich biodiverse habitat is being wantonly destroyed for low value disposable 'junk' products.

Very little high quality timber products are sourced these days from native forests, and many of the trees that were once harvested from native forests are now scarce and endangered themselves, for example, western red cedar.

The greatest majority of high quality timber products are sourced right now from plantation timbers and it is from this source that all timber products for housing, construction, transport and retail needs to be harvested.

### **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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The future of the timber industry cannot rely on the limited native forests left if there is any hope to stop the extinction of so many native species. It must fully transition to plantation forests. Plantation forests already supply 90% of hard and soft woods for housing, construction, retail and mining. This is the only economically viable future for timber harvesting apart from recycling (how much timber products end up as landfill?). Other countries have made the transition, so should Australia and NSW before there are no more healthy native forests left.

4. Plantation forests on previously cleared lands must be the future and Forestry Corporation must transition immediately from logging native forests if there is any hope of reversing the extinction crisis facing our natural environment. Previously cleared does not mean destruction of existing native forests for plantations, but adding to carbon capture and storage by converting to more sustainable land management of already degraded lands.

### **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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Australians value our wildlife and value our natural spaces and forests as do international tourists who come to Australia to spend billions of dollars in nature-based tourism. Native Forest logging is in direct antithesis of this. Ending Native Forest logging will result in more environmental, social and economic benefits and ultimately cohesion.

**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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At this historical point of time we are now seeing the beginning of the predicted catastrophic impacts of climate change but still have a very narrow window to act to limit it.

Continuing to log and clear native forests not only results in the release of significant increases of greenhouse gas emissions but also weakens the resilience of our natural systems to cope with the consequences of human-induced climate change catastrophic events.

By stopping logging of natural forests, especially in the promised Great Koala National Park, NSW can act in accordance with Nature Positive (or at least pausing Nature Negative) whilst decreasing emissions by expanding plantation forests that are both fast growing and carbon captures.

Increasing our forested areas will help reduce and remove greenhouse gases cleaning the atmosphere, cool existing landscapes, stabilise soils and prevent erosion and water catchment damage.