

MARK WRIGHT

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**Organisation:** *TIG Investments Pty. Ltd. Trading As Super Forest Plantations*

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

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I am a qualified forester and the owner and manager of Super Forest Plantations (SFP). My submission is based on 25 years experience growing in plantation durable hardwoods in the Northern Rivers NSW. Our operation is a mixed farming enterprise integrating cattle and timber production. We manage 3500ha of land, have 1200ha of timber plantation and run 1200 head of cattle. We directly employ 16 staff and utilise numerous contractors to effectively run the business. We would welcome interaction with and visitation from the Independent Forestry Panel, we have an interesting and positive story to tell. We established the business in late 1999 as we saw that there was a shrinking supply base and an expanding demand for timber in NSW, particularly in the durable hardwood space. Sadly, 25 years later, in 2024 the situation remains the same, demand for timber in NSW exceeds supply and NSW continues to be a net importer of timber. There has been very little private investment and limited public investment in durable hardwood plantations. At the same time the public and native forest available for timber production has decreased. All this while the population and consequent demand for timber has increased. The future of forestry operations in terms of demand is bright, there is demand for all timber produced. The issue is with the ability of the forestry industry to supply this demand, currently it cannot and does not meet the demand. Something needs to change, we need to increase the supply of timber to meet demand. There is much talk of a transition from native forest to plantation timber supply. To replace the native forest hardwood resource would require at 100,000 hectares of durable hardwood plantation. This cannot be done overnight, it would take 20 years of concerted effort to achieve this scale of plantation estate. It takes 30 to 40 years for durable hardwood timber plantations to mature. Full transition from native forest to plantation based supply would effectively take 60 years. Clearly, to meet current and future demand for hardwood timber, NSW needs to maintain or even expand the public native forest available and drastically increase the durable hardwood plantation estate. To increase the durable hardwood plantation estate the land for this would need to be found. This could bring the industry into conflict with agriculture. Integrating agricultural production with plantation forestry would lessen the impact of any plantation estate expansion and make such an expansion more palatable. Without the supply of timber from native forest source the industry would most likely fall into disarray, there would be closures of many businesses along the supply chain, from growing, harvesting and manufacturing sectors. This is happening already in Victoria and Western Australia where public native forestry has ceased without a proper transition plan. Since this cessation of public native forestry SFP has been contacted by processors in Victoria and Western Australia looking in desperation for supply of logs from us. The closure of public native forestry in NSW would have negative flow effects to other industries and local and statewide communities. It would also result in the loss of skills expertise that have developed over generations. It would most likely be catastrophic for our business as we would most likely have no where locally to process our timber. We have seen this first hand with businesses similar to us in scale and development Victoria staring down the barrel of having no local harvest contractors or processing facilities available by the time their resource comes on line.

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

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Under current legislation governing timber production from native forests and plantations there is adequate protection for all environmental and cultural values. This can and should be continually improved.

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

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There is very strong demand for timber products from NSW forestry. Our business regularly gets requests for timber products for all over Australia and overseas, even putting pressure on us to harvest early. New markets for residue products are establishing and emerging, such as bioenergy, mulch and soft fertiliser, biochar and more on top of existing chip markets for pulp, landscaping and other.

**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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As already stated there is a need for an expansion of the durable hardwood plantation estate and continuation of both public and private native forestry to meet demand.

**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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Publicly managed forests play a very important role delivering positive environmental, economic and social outcomes for society. The management of our public timber production forest estate is second to none worldwide, the fact that NSW is still producing valuable timber from our public native forest after over 100 years of management whilst still providing diverse habitat for ecosystem resilience and public access for recreation is testament to this. There is great scope and opportunity to allow for Aboriginal cultural practices and management to be allowed back into these forests that would greatly benefit the forests and society (this is for production and conservation forests).

**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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Forestry really is the most sustainable industry on the planet, producing a wide range of much needed natural products with a multitude of unavoidable beneficial side effects. The growing of timber provides long term habitat for wildlife, cleans the air, activates the small water cycles, reduces pollution of waterways, sequesters carbon, adds a productive layer to the landscape and more. The products themselves reduce the carbon footprint of the projects they are used in and provide biophysical benefits to the built environment. We need more trees for a multitude of reasons, forestry is an important part of the mix that can deliver more trees into the landscape.