

TORI BAIL

Submission ID: 204700

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**Organisation:** N/A

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**Location:** New South Wales

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** N/A

Submission date: 10/13/2024 8:42:14 AM

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

Logging what is left of our native forests is not sustainable. We can't keep taking out older trees, removing hollows and ignoring the science as per all State and Federal 'State of the the Environment' reports which tell us that our natural environment is in deep trouble. The logging industry can't keep moving the goal posts on over logged and diminished forests that have already been flogged and over committed, by quotas and regulation that favour meeting industry needs . What will our native forest estate look like in 10 years if we continue with a business as usual approach? We need an urgent transition to plantation timber and there is plenty of room for that in NSW.

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

There is not enough 'ecological margin' left in many state forests to support the needs of threatened animals and plants which provide refuges for many threatened species that rely on mature intact forests. Forests need time to recover and provide benefits to water quality and flow which is important for fishing and tourism. Well managed forests provide recreational values for locals and visitors to visit our amazing and unique landscapes and this leads to rural and economic renewal. Co-management of National Parks has been a successful model which could be widely adopted in State Forests to include First Nations input on feral animals, invasive weeds, wildlife monitoring, visitor and fire management. Co-management enhances the cultural and spiritual connection and is a more meaningful opportunity in employment.

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

Australian government data shows that by 2022, 90% of native forest logging went to making paper or woodchips. (ABARES 2021 , Australian Forest and Wood Products Statistics:March-June Quarters 2021).

In the preceding 5-10 years this figure was 85%.

There is no longer any need to log public native forests to build houses. Plantations can supply high quality and composite timber products and if we stop exporting the current 97% of eucalyptus pulp logs and instead processed plantation timber closer to where it is grown, this would create many jobs in processing, provide a transition out of the public estate and diversify income streams for farmers in establishing and managing plantations.

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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**

PNF already accounts for 37% of the 20 million hectares of native forests in NSW. There is a lot more land available for PNF and it is already a significant source of timber supply to timber mills and businesses. Alarmingly Private Native Forestry could become the next frontier and we are already seeing properties for sale, marketed with PNF as a selling point with large capital returns

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on the investment. These properties are already being scouted and bought, by logging companies, to give them private access to the timber. At the same time, there is no commitment to the wellbeing of local community.

Private lands are not appropriately managed by LLS through the desktop approval process, and there are many more issues around compliance due to lack of follow up by the EPA, unless reported by the public or neighbours. This is difficult as PNF is usually not visible or accessible due to it being on private land.

There is no transparency on the location of PNF, as the LLS so called 'public register' of where logging is taking place is not public at all. This frustrates the efforts of agencies working under the Koala Strategy for eg. to assess and plan habitat corridors. Most Koalas are on private lands and there is more available land for logging on private land than public.

At a local government level, compliance is inadequate and not consistent with requirements for other land use and development proposals if there is no dual consent. PNF agreements have no approval mechanism to local government therefore it is difficult to monitor the cumulative impact of PNF operations on threatened species given the desk top only approval by LLS.

Harvesting timber for the purpose of PNF requires approval through a forestry plan, ensuring that ecologically sustainable forest management is implemented and measures are put in place to mitigate impacts on plants, animals, soil and water, but it is an impossibility to complete a PNF plan that ensures ESFM.

According to all State and Federal 'State of the Environment' reports, biodiversity and the compounding effects of climate change puts our natural world on a trajectory of collapse without stronger protections. BMAD, bushfire increases, forest regeneration not undertaken, control of pest and weeds are all major issues that receive minimal attention in the May 22 PNF Code.

There is already a bleed into logging on private lands and the rules are not adequate to protect if public logging is closed. PNF has a dramatic impact on habitat and species and moving to plantation timber would be a far more sustainable outcome.

We need strong regulation and improved compliance in this space, now, and ahead of the pressures that ending public logging will place on our iconic private native forest estate.

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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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Forestry Corporation is currently financially unsustainable, relying on government support and yielding less timber compared to managed plantations. The future for State Forests can be jobs positive by

re vegetating large areas of forests that have failed to regenerate after logging and/or repeated wildfires

creating jobs for First Nations people managing Country

increasing employment in tourism that generates jobs and helps connect more people to the natural environment for physical and mental wellbeing

developing elite fire-fighting crews to protect rural communities

controlling feral animals and creating new industries to use the meat

expanding and then better managing the plantation estate

including processing far more of our Australian-grown plantation timber in Australia for Australian jobs.

**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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The Australian Government signed and committed to halt and reverse deforestation at COP 26 and to emphasise the critical and interdependent roles of forests of all types to acknowledge the role of biodiversity and sustainable land use in enabling the world to meet its sustainable development goals to help achieve a balance between anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and removal by sinks to adapt to climate change and to maintain other ecosystem services. They committed to working collectively to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation. Plantations are sustainable and rural transformation creates jobs. Long term storage of carbon in forests is critical to tackling climate change. Logging native forests releases large amounts of carbon and contributes to climate change. If we allow our forests to recover they will be able to store more carbon and align with our climate goals on climate change effects of wildfires and drought. Carbon markets in healthy forests can play a role.