

01

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# Independent Forestry Panel

Peter Duncan AM (Chair)  
Professor Mary O’Kane AC  
The Hon. Mick Veitch

Independent  
Forestry Panel

# About the Independent Forestry Panel

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- The Independent Forestry Panel – comprised of Peter Duncan AM (Chair), Professor Mary O’Kane AC and the Hon. Mick Veitch – was announced by Government on Monday 26 August
- The Panel was established to engage with stakeholders to inform the development of the Forestry Industry Action Plan by the NSW Government
- The Office of the Independent Planning Commission is providing secretariat support to the Independent Forestry Panel. The Independent Planning Commission itself is not involved in the work of the Panel
- The results of the Panel’s consultation will be provided in a report to Government by the end of the year to ensure the Forestry Industry Action Plan is reflective of the range of stakeholders engaged and interested in the future of forestry in NSW.

## The Panel is listening to multiple views and evidence

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- Written submissions
- Qualitative stakeholder research
- Panel stakeholder meetings
- Research and news media analytics

## Written submissions

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- open from Thursday 12 September to Sunday 13 October 2024
- submitters were prompted to respond to six topic areas that the Government indicated would be covered in its Forestry Industry Action Plan:
  1. *Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW*
  2. *Environmental and cultural values of forests*
  3. *Demand for timber products*
  4. *The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry*
  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*
  6. *Opportunities to realise carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity markets*
- more than **1650 submissions** received and are being progressively published
- the effort put into preparing submissions is valued highly and each written submission duly received by the Panel is being read closely. Given the large number of submissions, supplementary analytical tools will also be used to assist the Panel in its review.

## Qualitative stakeholder research

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- Research company Stollznow Research was commissioned by the NSW Government to conduct:
  - three focus group meetings and up to twenty individual interviews with targeted stakeholders that represent key industry, environmental and recreation groups
  - a further eight regional community focus groups covering the North and Far North coast, the South coast, the Riverina and the Far North West and a spectrum of views on the role of forests, native forestry and the goods and services provided by forests
- This research will assist the Panel in considering a diverse range of opinions, feedback, evidence and lived experience
- The research report to be provided to the Panel will be deidentified so that it does not disclose the views of the individual organisations that participated.

## Stakeholder meetings

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- The Panel will be hearing from a broad range of stakeholders, including from the timber industry and environmental groups and seeking engagement with Aboriginal stakeholder organisations
- The Panel is also hearing from government-appointed and external experts
- The Panel is receiving internal portfolio briefings from relevant government agencies including central government senior officers and others from various agencies.

## Research and news media analytics

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The Panel is supplementing its review of the issues with:

- news media analysis of forestry issues coverage over the past 3-5 years in the Sydney Morning Herald, ABC (including regional), and The Australian
- large-scale analysis of peer-reviewed research in leading global and domestic academic journals.

## A note about transparency

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The Panel's starting position is transparency, balanced with protecting confidentiality and the effectiveness and integrity of the consultation process

- More than 500 stakeholders have registered their interest to be kept updated by email on the Panel's consultation process
- Duly received submissions are being published online
- External stakeholder meetings will generally be recorded, transcribed and published online after the meeting
- Presentations from internal government briefings will generally be published online after the meeting
- Organisations that participated in the qualitative research were given an option for their participation being made public or not – those that agreed are listed on the website. Any publication of the qualitative research report is a matter for Government to determine.
- Any publication of the Panel's report is a matter for Government to determine.