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

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

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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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**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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**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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**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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Submission Brief: Sustainability of Current and Future Forestry Operations in NSW

## Introduction

The sustainability of forestry operations in New South Wales (NSW) is a critical issue that requires immediate and strategic action. This submission outlines the need to transition towards a more sustainable forestry industry, emphasizing the importance of ceasing the use of native forests for timber production.

## Current State of Forestry in NSW

Forestry operations in NSW currently rely on both native forests and plantations. Native forests, which are rich in biodiversity and cultural heritage, face significant threats from logging, bushfires, and climate change. The reliance on native forests for timber production is unsustainable and poses risks to the environment and biodiversity.

## Environmental and Cultural Values

Native forests in NSW are home to numerous threatened species and hold significant cultural value for Aboriginal communities. The continued exploitation of these forests for timber undermines efforts to preserve these critical habitats and cultural sites. Protecting native forests is essential for maintaining biodiversity, supporting carbon sequestration, and preserving cultural heritage.

## Economic and Social Considerations

The forestry industry is vital for regional economies, providing jobs and supporting local communities. However, the long-term sustainability of these benefits is jeopardized by the depletion of native forests. Transitioning to plantation-based forestry can ensure a stable supply

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of timber while protecting native forests. This shift can also open new opportunities for eco-tourism and other sustainable industries.

#### Future Directions

1. **Expansion of Plantations:** Increasing the area of softwood and hardwood plantations can meet timber demand without compromising native forests. This approach supports sustainable timber production and reduces pressure on native ecosystems.
2. **Innovative Forestry Practices:** Adopting advanced forestry practices, such as agroforestry and mixed-species plantations, can enhance productivity and sustainability.
3. **Innovative Products:** Exploring the use of fast-growing bamboo species and engineered products from forestry waste materials can significantly contribute to sustainability. Bamboo, known for its rapid growth and high carbon sequestration capacity, can be a viable alternative to traditional timber. Additionally, engineered products made from forestry waste, such as wood composites and biomaterials, can reduce waste and provide sustainable material options. This can create a differentiated and attractive new industry for domestic and export.
4. **Policy and Regulation:** Strengthening policies and regulations to protect native forests and promote sustainable forestry practices is crucial. Incentives for plantation forestry and penalties for illegal logging can drive positive change.
5. **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Engaging with local communities, Aboriginal groups, and other stakeholders ensures that forestry practices align with environmental, economic, and cultural priorities.

#### Conclusion

To stimulate a more sustainable forestry industry in NSW, it is imperative to transition away from using native forests for timber production immediately. By expanding plantations, adopting innovative practices, and strengthening policies, NSW can achieve a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation.