

Public submission

JAN WEGNER

Submission ID: 202991

Organisation: *N/A*

Location: *Queensland*

Supporting materials uploaded: *Attached overleaf*

Submission date: 10/7/2024 12:58:22 PM

I wish to make a statement to the Forestry Industry Action Plan.

I oppose the logging of native forests.

Only native forests have the right mix of species to support endangered species such as the koala, Greater Glider and Coastal Emu, as well as many others. Forestry in Australia is advanced enough that plantation timbers should be able to supply timber needs without harvesting native forests.

It has always been a mystery to me why native animals are protected from being shot or otherwise killed directly yet it is perfectly legal to kill them by destroying the trees they are living on or starving them by reducing their habitat to unsustainable levels for the population concerned. The apparent belief that animals can 'go somewhere else' belongs in the 19th century, not the 21st. Knowledge of animal behaviour and territorial needs for sustenance has advanced well beyond that simplistic belief. Simply put, logging native forests kills endangered animals.

I am also concerned about reports of illegal logging by NSW Forestry Corporation. If a government entity won't obey the law, what hope do we have for making private landholders do the same? A government body shouldn't be setting an example of lawlessness. Protecting native forests would ensure no further such breaches occur.

The idea of 'sustainable' native forests is false. Plantation forests are based on species that are fast growing and can be encouraged to grow in ways that suit the end result. A native forest is made up of many different species, very few of which are suited to timber use and some of which are very slow growing, and even harvesting only the larger trees means taking the very trees that offer the best habitat for many arboreal animals and birds e.g. older trees with one or more hollow branches. The result of selective logging is a degraded forest which is no longer as suitable for the survival of animals as what existed before.

I don't think many people realise how limited koala habitat is. Native forest suitable for koalas only occurs in southeast Queensland, eastern NSW, Victoria, and parts of southern South Australia. This area has mainly been cleared for farming and urban settlement and the patchwork of remnants need urgently to be protected – not further destroyed.

The fact that these forests exist in the most densely populated parts of Australia, an area where the population is still growing, gives a clue to their more sustainable use for recreation and tourism.

As well, native forests protect soils by keeping groundwater levels low so soil salination is prevented. I have watched in horror as Queensland clears most of its native savannah forests for beef cattle, despite these forests being positioned over saline groundwater reserves. The next century will see a disaster unfolding, all because of short term gain. Forests also protect water supplies by preventing erosion and preventing floods because forest soils absorb rain and slowly release it into watercourses, keeping them flowing longer and mitigating drought, while cleared land contributes to flooding through quick run-off and the watercourses then dry up sooner. Plantation forests can't give these benefits because they are clear-felled once the trees reach a desired size.

Finally, as a victim of one of those 'highest in history' floods last year, I have an interest in climate change and the mitigation of its effects i.e. extreme weather events. I am sure the sufferers from catastrophic bushfires feel the same way. While old growth forests are not the

most efficient carbon sinks, clearing them certainly contributes a great deal to carbon loss to the atmosphere.