

Public submission

MARTIN BES

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Dear Forestry Industry Action Panel,

This is a submission to your inquiry into the sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW.

As a long time educator I have had the chance to learn much about the natural and the social world. In science I have learned of the changes that have occurred on our planet since its beginning 4.6 billion years ago and the influence that life itself has on the Earth's climate. In social studies and history I have learned that while humans are incredibly perceptive and intelligent beings too often we make poor decisions driven by emotional needs that result in making everyone worse off.

To make good decisions we need to try to objectively ascertain what are the most important outcomes we want to reach.

In looking at our world today and the massive changes that have occurred, particularly since the industrial revolution, we can clearly see that our environment is rapidly deteriorating and consequently so will our own present comfortable way of life. The evidence of typhoons, flash floods, droughts, wildfires, scorching temperatures and so on is already upon us. Continuing as we are these harmful effects will only accelerate.

Our primary objective should be to arrest these changes and return the world's biosphere to its previous balance. Our secondary objective is to maintain our comfortable standard of living. These two objectives need not be mutually exclusive.

1 Sustainability of Logging Native Forest

By definition logging native forest is not sustainable. We log but not replace what was. Since Europeans arrived Australia has lost at least 50% of all original forests and what remains is highly fragmented. Logging of native forests means destroying what was once a balanced environment and replacing with, at best, monoculture plantations. Monoculture plantations increase the danger of fires and do not promote the biodiversity of the land.

Conclusion: All native forest logging in NSW should stop as it is not sustainable.

For sustainable logging we should plant a mixture of desirable timber trees using land that has already been degraded, either by mining, agriculture or plain deforestation.

2 Environmental / cultural values of forests

Along with massive forest loss Australia ranks as one of the worst nations in losing native species. The continuation of logging of native forests means additional loss of habitat for already threatened species like the cuddly koala.

There are many species of which we know little that may be of great benefit to us but could disappear.

We need to respect and value the biodiversity that remains and promote it. Many nations enjoy commercial success based on eco-tourism.

5 The Role of State Forests

State Forests of NSW should be an organisation that contributes to the welfare of all the people of NSW. They need to dedicate their resources to enhancing forest products so that they are truly sustainable. They must not accelerate their destruction but rather rehabilitate and increase plantations in degraded lands.

6 Carbon and Diversity Benefits

Climate change is of extreme importance to us all and we are far from doing enough to stop the acceleration of excessive greenhouse gases, let alone reducing them to bring back a better balance balance.

Deforestation increases the release of carbon emissions, worsening an already poor situation. It also destroys the natural diversity and further endangers the remaining native flora and fauna.

Increasing native forests does the opposite, captures carbon emissions, cools down the atmosphere, promotes a more balanced water cycle, retains more water in soils and allows for the native flora and fauna to thrive.

In conclusion I would like recommend that all of us make the greatest effort in preserving what we have and in fact to enhance the natural environment so that we can continue to enjoy our comfortable standard of living.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to hearing from you in regard to this submission and the outcomes of the review.

Yours sincerely,

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