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

The current system lacks the gatekeeping to ensure sustainability and breaches are common. There is an opportunity to create a new system that goes beyond "sustainable" to something truly "regenerative", where previously cleared and degraded land is rehabilitated and used to grow timber. There are also opportunities for fine timbers to be grown in integrated farm systems with government support.

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

The protection and restoration of all remaining Australian forests needs to be prioritised. A forest ecosystem is not only the elements within that system, but also the intricate connections between them. Selective logging causes significant damage to forests and clear felling is surely unconscionable given the vast clearing that has occurred across Australia and the comparatively small land area still occupied by forests.

Where forests are protected it should be primarily Aboriginal people who are employed to manage them. Their connection to country is something that no non-Aboriginal person can ever really understand.

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

Sequestering carbon in the form of timber building materials and the use of fine timbers in furniture, instrument making and other high value products can be of significant environmental benefit IF the process for growing and harvesting that timber is done in a way that protects all remaining forests. We have no shortage of land on which to create new plantations. The harvesting of plantation timber might benefit from being marketed in a way that highlights the environmental benefits of using timber rather than the alternatives like steel or plastic. There seems to be a perception that cutting down trees is always a bad thing, when in fact, cutting trees for timber and replanting can be of environmental benefit (or not, depending upon how and where it's done).

Topic 4. The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs

Plantations are essential to the future of the industry and highly preferable to selective logging of existing natural forests, but only where the felling of those forests isn't a precursor to creating plantations.

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

State Forests have a significant role to play but need better enforcement of breaches.

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

There are, as previously stated, significant opportunities here, particularly when combined with methods such as regenerative farming, and Peter Andrew's methods for restoring water tables and reducing irrigation. P A Yeoman's work on shaping land to slow, sink and spread water might also be used to reduce or eliminate the need for irrigation. Rowan Reid's work (see his book, Heartwood) is worthy of close attention (has this already happened?) because his methods include growing high value timber to harvest point in a way that rebuilds ecological health and doing it in less time than Forestry considers possible.