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

I was recently visited by some customers of my company who wanted to see the entire process of the native hardwood timber that they were purchasing, from start to finish. These guys were from the city, and had no clue as to how the sawn timber product that arrived on site to them, had begun its journey.

We ventured out to the harvesting site and gathered round for a brief discussion and to answer any questions that they had. We were able to point out to the guys about the types of trees they were seeing around them. We showed them the processes of selective harvesting and how each tree wasn't all the same. Some trees were left as habitat trees, some trees were too small, some trees weren't the right species that we were looking for, and some trees just grew the way high winds and nature had subjected them too, which didn't allow them to grow true and straight. We discussed the effects of selective harvesting and allowing natural light into the forest floor to allow seedlings to grow. We also discussed the benefits of a good slow burning fire to clear the undergrowth and help stimulate the germination of the seedlings.

We then demonstrated the felling process and then taking the tree to the dump site for collection. The guys were amazed at how little effect this had on the surrounding bushland and how from the road that we travelled in on was just metres away from the dump site and that you wouldn't have even noticed that this operation was going on.

We then ventured back to the sawmill to demonstrate how the tree is then processed and cut into the product that they required. They were blown away by the process and couldn't understand why people would be against using native hardwood timbers. I asked them why they thought that way? Their response was "Timber is regenerative and what other products could be processed that way without causing the environment permanent harm, the process that you guys showed us today is surely the most sustainable structural building product around"

It is my opinion that timber harvesting in its current format is going to thrive forever as the the amount of timber available to harvest and the amount of timber locked up in national parks for our native flora and fauna is the right system for people from all sides to benefit from.