

DONALD WHITE

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

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Forest Management practices for the last 30 years - when I've been involved with forests - have been for the extractive use of timber rather than for the ecological development of values in the Forest.

There have been proposals in NSW to reserve significant areas of State Forest for a Great Koala National Park but these areas that are to be set aside have been extensively logged recently. Forestry New South Wales operations are not financially profitable, so the New South Wales government is subsidising this industry.

There is a culture of non-compliance and even criminality in Forest Corporation and the EPA has proved incapable of adequately regulating the existing logging requirements.

Many studies show logging native forests greatly increases their flammability and so significantly elevates the bushfire risk to the local ecology and surrounding human settlements.

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

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The environmental values are many and varied, with the quality and quantity being related to the relative health and how intact a particular forest is. Logging is a great disturbance to forests and may result in permanent changes to the structures, ecosystem functions and species.

The negative effects of logging include:

- a healthy and intact forest will store more carbon than a degraded and logged forest.
- logging negatively affects the provision of clean, reliable, sustainable water supplies.
- logging removes hollow-bearing trees that 174 species in NSW depend upon
- logging increases the problem of weed infiltration and tree dieback
- Logging dries forest and makes it more prone to fires

People closely relate to forests, and they've got significant cultural values.

Forests have a significant relaxing effect on people and so people get very disturbed when they're logged and these amenities are removed

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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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The demand for forest products seems to be dwindling. While there is a small market for native hardwood, a significant quantity of the NSW forests is being exported as Wood chips. Many studies show that saw logs and composite timber products from plantations can satisfy the demand for timber products.

It's becoming increasingly common for hardwood products to be substituted with alternative materials such as plastic, steel and laminated softwoods

The actual act of logging in New South Wales has become increasingly mechanised, so the number of people employed in this industry is rapidly reducing. There has been a fair bit of investment of capital in the machinery required for logging, and as we transition away from native forest logging, this will have to be handled equitably, but much of this will be able to be repurposed

## **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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I think New South Wales should convert to a 100% plantation-based forestry industry and do this quite rapidly. i.e. within 2 years

All private native forestry operations must be required to prepare Development Applications as required for other actions on private lands. These are essential to account for all local, regional or state planning instruments, or other planning regulations that relate to the site, as well as off-site impacts on the environment, infrastructure (roads and bridges), road safety, local amenities and neighbours.

The NSW Environmental Protection Agency should be adequately resourced and supported by the government to ensure strict adherence to Private Native Forestry regulations.

Forest certification standards are important to ensure that forest Management practice is performed to decent standards, correctly and sustainably.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) maintains a set of standards and certification systems which I think is pretty minimum adequate, but nevertheless, it does provide a framework that should be a minimum requirement for compliance.

There are significant issues with forest dieback in many areas of NSW which is a situation that is expected to get rapidly worse due to climate change. Despite this -- little effort has been made to rehabilitate affected stands. Areas at risk by dieback across all tenures should be excluded from logging and effectively rehabilitated.

## **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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State Forest's substantial holdings in New South Wales have the potential to contribute to increased tourism recreation activity and provide improved environmental services associated with water quality and carbon storage.

State Forest used to manage Forests to some degree of sustainability, but this has significantly dropped away in the 30 years. Now, their operations are essentially clear-fell and replant.

There seems to be a tendency for State Forest to go into more difficult landscapes in terms of the steepness of the terrain. I guess this is due to the fact they've logged out all the easy-to-get areas.

The consequences of this are significant erosion and degradation in water quality. There are many valuable benefits associated with improved water outcomes. For example, conserving native forests within reservoir catchments can significantly increase water yields

## **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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Preserving intact native forests will reduce carbon emissions as they store significantly more carbon than logged and regenerated native forests.

Forest management to reduce fire risk must be based on sound, independent, science. Extractive logging for fire breaks and thinning for fire management are currently being carried out in Victoria's native forests. I am not sure there is any evidence that this logging activity is based on sound, independent science.

The biodiversity benefits of intact native forests have been well documented (I am sure other submissions will provide references) and will add to national accounts regardless of biodiversity

## Public submission

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market mechanisms. An end to native forest logging will be the most effective and most cost-effective, way to maintain and increase the biodiversity values of our native forests.