

Public submission

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John P.Browne Pty Ltd.

Your email address; 

Topic 1 Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW

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

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

John P.Browne Pty Ltd, is a specialised hardwood sourcing and timber trading company that's been doing business in Sydney since 1931.

The company is structured as wholesale timber merchants and sawmill agents. We do not deal with the public, we deal with our other Sydney & Melbourne wholesale and retail timber merchants who are dealing with the builders, the architects and the general public.

We specialise in NSW hardwoods. Spotted Gum, Blackbutt, Tallowwood, Ironbark, Grey Gum, Grey Box, Brushbox ,Red & White Mahogany just to name a few which are sourced from NSW State Forests. These are the species we are working with most of the time. We know their qualities, their specifications and standards.

Sourcing commercial quantities of hardwood timber for large new housing, construction and renovation projects is time consuming and tricky for those who don't know the industry. That's why other Wholesale & Retail merchants will often choose to retain our services because we deliver cost-effective hardwood solutions for these firms and they get to concentrate on their core business functions.

Some of our customers will tell me what particular hardwood they need and then we will go and hunt for it. That's how the company got the nickname the "timber hunter." I go and talk to the mills, locate who has the species required, order it, and get the timber delivered to the customer via a wholesale merchant.

We know local hardwoods, their qualities, specifications and standards, so we get asked to advise some customers on which species of hardwood is going to best align with the structural and aesthetic requirements of their project and then go and source the wood.

We get government orders for heritage building refurbishment jobs via other merchants. The old Bond Stores at the Rocks in Sydney, for example, were recently refurbished. We were able to source the hardwood to replace 200 year old roof trusses and load bearing beams and interior pillars. Many tonnes of hardwood went into that job.

My business would be severely impacted if the government banned native hardwood harvesting in State Forests.

We would have to rely upon Private Native Forestry, along with everybody else and PNF could not fill the supply gap, there are not enough trees growing on private land today to supply the market.

However, if the government did act to suddenly cease all State Forest harvesting, then the cost of imported hardwood substitutes is going to increase perhaps by 25% or more.

That would significantly increase the cost of building new homes and apartments in NSW.

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

There are not enough plantation hardwood trees growing in NSW today to replace the wood harvested in State Forests. New plantations that businesses and farmers might be encouraged to develop will take at least 50 - 70 years to grow a millable saw log and be able to start producing the quantities of hardwood the market requires.

At the moment, plantation forest farmers are often planting a single hardwood species like spotted gum but architects and builders and their customer want variety, they want different species for different uses and I don't know how we are going to be able supply the variety of hardwoods builders prefer using for housing and construction purposes if the state forests are closed off?

Getting a credible organisation like the CSIRO to research and develop best-practice hardwood plantation business models and then encouraging widespread new plantations that will steadily increase market access to hardwood supplies is the way to go. Moving forward incrementally means NSW could transition away from native forest harvesting without too much economic disruption.

Nature makes the very best plantations, a mixed specie forest all of different ages and if selectively logged will continue for generations to come.

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

A great deal of the hardwood John P.Browne Pty Ltd locates and delivers to our customers is sourced from a NSW State Forest.

There are not enough trees growing in plantations and on private land at this point in time to satisfy the market demand for hardwood in NSW.

Topic 6. Opportunities to realise carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity benefits, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks, including the greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risk to forests