

Answers to questions to Justin Williams

1. a) Yes we can as it is recorded in our mapping system although is not a standard report to run and would take considerable resources to report on at a state-wide level.

b) We do not include koala hubs in our mapping process.

c) The koala habitat modelling covers all forests tenures across the north coast, including plantations and native forests.

d) No

e) Areas originally established and classified as hardwood plantations are subject to changes due to mapping updates. This can be due to two primary causes; 1. Where historical mapping was inaccurate and new mapping technologies allow for more precise mapping. 2. Where the regulatory regime under which plantations were established has changed and it is no longer possible to manage a plantation or parts of a plantation due to the relevant environmental regulations.

Forestry Corporation may also make a management decision where small or isolated areas previously classified as Hardwood Plantation that are not viable to manage in the long term as plantations due to their size or inappropriate location will be reverted to native forest management as was the case in Orara West State Forest.

Any area to be managed perpetually as a plantation must be authorised under the Plantation and Re-forestation Act and therefore must satisfy the criteria for authorisation under that Act.

f) No

g) Yes

2-5. Forestry Corporation does not sell timber products directly to consumers. Questions about market trends and consumer behaviour should be directed to Forestry Corporation's customers or the industry body Forest and Wood Products Australia.

6. Questions about the Australian Forest Products Association's modelling should be directed to that organisation.

7-8. Questions about Ximenes' report should be directed to the author.

9. This is addressed in section 1.2 and 1.3 of Forestry Corporation's submission to this inquiry.

10. This is addressed in section 1.4 of Forestry Corporations Submission.

11. Effective land management must be driven by robust data and underpinned by ongoing research. Sound scientific land management principles look at land regardless of tenure and:

- identify a baseline measure, for example a baseline population count, including an understanding of the dynamics of the population over time.
- identify the threats to population functioning and where they occur across the landscape
- establish management actions that will address the specific identified threats where they occur
- establish an ongoing monitoring mechanism to measure the effectiveness of those management actions and better understand the dynamics of koala populations across NSW over time.
- incorporate ongoing review mechanisms.

12. There is no current estimate. The new research detailed in part 1.2 of Forestry Corporation's submission has to date only been carried out on the north coast and not the south coast.

13. Field surveys for flora and fauna, including koalas, are carried out prior to all native forest operations.

14. Koala habitat corridors refer to areas of vegetation that are retained during operations to ensure a link between various areas of retained vegetation throughout the landscape. There is a vast network of identified and mapped harvesting exclusion zones across all state forest areas.

15. Industry employment figures are published by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES).

Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment

Inquiry into koala populations and habitat in New South Wales

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS – Hearing 16 August 2019

**Mr Justin Williams, Manager, Strategic Planning, Hardwood Forests Division,
Forestry Corporation of NSW**

1. Areas of state forest previously identified as hardwood plantation have apparently been reclassified as native forest in recent years, for example, see harvest Plan for compartments 638/639 Orara West State Forest
 - a. If so can you identify which areas, the extent and in which state forests?
 - b. Which areas reclassified from hardwood plantation are in mapped koala hubs?
 - c. Which areas of reclassified plantation are in various classes of modelled koala habitat in accordance with the coastal IFOA?
 - d. Does the reclassification impact on the protection of koala habitat?
 - e. What criteria are applied for assessment and reclassification of hardwood plantations?
 - f. Is the protection of identified koala habitat taken into consideration in the assessment and reclassification?
 - g. Is the assessment and reclassification of hardwood plantations an ongoing process?
2. What timber products are in the highest demand in NSW?
3. Is the use of these timbers declining and are alternatives emerging?
4. Is solid hardwood timber flooring now a high priced or boutique product in the Australian and international markets?
5. What is the range of alternatives now available to solid hardwood timber flooring?
6. In regards to your statement *"The Australian Forest Products Association released economic modelling indicating that proposal would cost \$757 million a year to the NSW economy and cut almost 2000 jobs"*
 - a. Your submission said that implementing the GKNP would reduce the availability of high-quality logs by about 40%. Does AFPA's economical modelling relate to this estimate of a 40% reduction in supply or does it relate to the entire wood supply agreement on the North Coast of NSW? If the latter, is the AFPA report an accurate appraisal of the impacts of the GKNP?
7. In regards to your statement *"Ximenes et al (2016) reported that the cost of transition of the NSW public native forests from timber production to conservation reserves would be \$3.36B on the north coast, not accounting for predicted decline in regional employment."*
 - a. The report states (pg 169) that "extrapolating the values in Figure 7.7 to the North Coast Region (792,361 hectares of State Forest) the cost of transition is \$540M". The \$3.36 billion figure appears to be the "loss to the regional economy" over 65 years (or \$51.7 million per year), not the cost of transition. Is his correct?

- b. Is it also correct, based on the same report, that “extrapolating the values in Figure 7.6 to the Eden Region (164,000 hectares of State Forest) the cost of transition is \$64M”, and that the estimated loss to the regional economy is \$308M over 65 years (\$4.6 million per year)?
8. Does Ximenes’ report include the potential benefits from expanded ecotourism, and potential for environmental repair and rehabilitation, likely improvements in water supplies and improvements in biodiversity conservation?
9. In regards to your statement *“Importantly, the creation of this proposed reserve does not address any known threat or cause of decline.”*
 - a. Is FCNSW asserting that there is no impact of logging on koalas?
 - b. If so, what is the basis for this statement?
10. In regards to your statement *“Before any land use change, consideration must be given to: establishing baseline data on the koala population across the landscape in the area identified and an ongoing monitoring program to identify changes over time. Identifying the key threat to the local koala population and the land management activities in that will best mitigate that threat as well as the threat of drought, heatwaves and wildfires, and monitoring it over time. Completing a thorough review of existing land use and any direct or indirect economic implications stemming from the specific proposal. Tenure change will not address risks to koalas, as threats to koalas are not tenure-specific.”*
 - a. Is FCNSW asserting that there is no positive conservation benefit of protecting forests for wildlife? Can you please provide the evidence you have to support this statement?
11. In regards to your statement *“Any measures proposed to improve koala conservation in NSW must be based on sound scientific, land management principles.”*
 - a. Can you elaborate on the “sound scientific, land management principles and explain if they differ from sound scientific conservation planning principles?
12. What is the Forestry Corporation’s current estimate for the number of the koalas in the South Coast Region?
13. In which logging compartments were pre-logging field surveys done for koalas in the South Coast region in 2019, 2018 and 2017
14. What is a koala habitat corridor?
 - a. How is it defined and mapped in the field?
 - b. Is it protected as such?
15. Can you please provide the source for the 22,000 employment figure given by the Government and explain how it relates to the native and plantation sectors, and provide the Government’s estimate for the number of people employed in the native forest logging sector in NSW?