



# Post-hearing responses

**Date:** 22 December 2021

**Attention:** Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional New South Wales, Water and Agriculture

**Subject:** Responses to questions on notice on 1 December 2021 - Long term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry

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## Answers to questions on notice:

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*“The CHAIR: Can I just follow up on one thing? You have given a fairly good description of how the cross-tenure monitoring covered both State forests and national parks. Do you have a breakdown of how much was spent in terms of monitoring of State forests versus national parks? Are you able to accurately divide that up and give us a breakdown, perhaps on notice?”*

At the request of the Government, the Commission oversees in collaboration with NSW agencies the

- (i) NSW cross-tenure Forest Monitoring and Improvement Program and
  - (ii) the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals monitoring program, focused on state forests.
- NSW Forest Monitoring and Improvement Program - \$5.8 million expenditure up to 30 June 2021. This investment is for monitoring and research principally across both national parks and state forests:
    - \$4.4 million on cross-tenure monitoring, research and analysis largely on national parks and state forests, but also including crown land and private land
    - Includes five baseline projects on forests, fauna, water, soil and carbon, LiDAR capture, terrestrial laser scanning research and development, piloting state-wide plot network, fauna occupancy monitoring (plus supporting fauna call recognisers), post-fire recovery modelling, post-fire erosion mapping, Aboriginal led-Country based assessments, new methods and early data capture for forest dependent jobs across all tenures, improving carbon modelling, assessing forest road network, data management and citizen science investment.
    - \$1.4 million allocated to DPI Forest Science unit over the same period for scientific program support.
  - Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals monitoring program - \$1.2 million up to 30 June 2021 targeted monitoring and research to evaluate the effectiveness of the Coastal IFOA rule set on state forests only.

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*“Mr Justin Field: That is probably the entire answer, to a degree. What is the resolution here though? There is a forest, there is a forest, there is a forest, right? For the National Carbon Accounting System I think 20 per cent indicates a forest. What sort of resolution do you go down to in order to determine the density and the biodiversity values of that? What do you mean by a 6 per cent increase in extent?”*

- Forest extent is the spatial coverage of forest across a given landscape. The program adopts the Australia’s National Forest Inventory forest definition.
- The National Forest and Sparse Woody Vegetation (NCAS) grid data, using this definition includes a minimum 20 per cent canopy cover, at least 2 metres high, and a minimum area of 0.2 hectares (or 50 metres by 50 metres).
- The NCAS Grid uses Landsat imagery which is at a 25 metre resolution which has been collected in a consistent way over a long period.
- Using a forest classification scheme based on 8-years of sequential NCAS data, and excluding areas not deemed to support forest communities, there has been an increase of about 475,000 hectares in the total forest extent across the Regional Forest Agreement regions between 2000 and 2020.
- The increase in forest extent has been largely driven by increases in the private tenure.
- Forest extent on freehold/leasehold appears to have been relatively stable until 2009, after which it increased by about 3% to 2011, then increased by another 6% between 2016 and 2019.