

**Submission  
No 104**

**INQUIRY INTO LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY AND  
FUTURE OF THE TIMBER AND FOREST PRODUCTS  
INDUSTRY**

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Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry: Long term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my views about this important subject.

I live in Urunga just south of Coffs Harbour and have been living in this beautiful region for 35 years. I have travelled Australia extensively and am aware that the NSW east coast is a tiny and very special part of this dry and widely deforested continent. I count myself lucky to have enjoyed many places before they have been destroyed by fires, development, climate change, weeds or pests. For my wife and I nature provides nourishment for the soul, healing for the body and much joy for the spirit.

We often go for walks in nearby Newry state forest. There are recently cleared areas. Along the creeks they left narrow rows of trees, half of them very damaged - a token effort. We also noticed lots of logs left at the log dumps, pushed out of the way for no apparent reason. Wasted. On the bright side we saw a lot of native shrubs, grasses, tree seedlings starting to cover the wasted ground - until Forestry Corp aerial sprayed the area with herbicide. They did this without warning and without care. They are planning to do some more destruction again soon at Newry and local people are mobilising. Similarly at Pine Creek State forest logging operations are planned and people are mobilising. This is core habitat for koalas and a corridor to Bongil Bongil NP. Pine Creek state forest is just 15 k south of Coffs Harbour and will hopefully be the location of the visitors centre for the proposed Great Koala National Park. This park has the potential to create nearly 10 000 jobs and total economic output for the region of \$1.18 over 15 years according to a study by the University of Newcastle, yet the local member, Melinda Pavey, so far refuses to support it. Whose interests is she serving?

Even more resistance by the community was triggered by the threat of logging operations in the upper Kalang. I live by the Kalang just before it meets the Bellinger and together they flow into the ocean. I know the upper kalang. It's magical country, a labyrinth of gullies and ridges, a refuge for endangered animals and catchment for pristine water. It brings tears to my eyes to think of the destruction any logging operation there would mean. It's not just the trees taken, valuable trees that provide nesting sites and food for birds and gliders, store tons of carbon, protect the ground from erosion. It's also the roads put in, the dozer tracks, the collateral damage, the general degradation of the ecosystem and the disturbance to the community. Because all things are connected and that includes us.

Our area was mostly spared by the fires and that means it's even more important to care for it. The natural environment is under such pressure through fires, climate change and development, that further exploitation just means vandalism. And logging the few intact forests left is completely senseless, if we consider that the little employment that native forests provide can be offset easily by establishing more plantations, ecotourism, processing more timber in the country. If I buy native Australian hardwood flooring in Sydney, it's "made in China". We can do better than that. Another issue crying out for investment and with potential for lots of jobs is bush regeneration. We are presently loosing whole stretches of coastline to weeds. This land is lost to biodiversity, recreation and tourism. Instead of subsidising destructive forestry, let's regenerate and heal some of the damage done.

I implore you to save our native forests. Allow them to reach their potential and they will be most valuable assets for the community, create income and employment and be pillars of biodiversity.