

**Submission
No 115**

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

Name: Mr Jamie McMahon

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Inquiry into the long term sustainability and
future of the timber and forest products
industry
NSW Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Jamie McMahon

26 May 2021

Re: Please protect NSW's unique biodiversity.

Dear Committee,

Please consider this submission into the inquiry into the long term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry in NSW.

I urge the committee to take into consideration of the preservation of NSW's unique natural heritage when considering the future of logging into this state. It's difficult to emphasise just how important the native forests of NSW are to the long term preservation of our biodiversity and the sequestration of carbon in our fight against climate change.

It's not difficult to see just how important forests are for the conservation of biological diversity. I conducted a search of the NSW Bionet database just now. Of the 1,104 species, populations and communities listed, 847 of these are found in one or more of the following habitats:

- Dry sclerophyll forests (shrub/grass sub-formation)
- Dry sclerophyll forests (shrubby sub-formation)
- Forested wetlands
- Grassy woodlands
- Rainforests
- Semi-arid woodlands (grassy sub-formation)
- Semi-arid woodlands (shrubby sub-formation)
- Wet sclerophyll forests (grassy sub-formation)
- Wet sclerophyll forests (shrubby sub-formation)

This equates to **77% of the threatened species within NSW** being associated with forest or woodland ecosystems. Of course, these species are just those that are listed as threatened, with thousands more dependent upon these ecosystems for their survival.

From the very day Europeans stepped off their boats onto Australian soil we've treated forest ecosystems as just another resource. Whilst timber has played, and will continue to play, an important role in our state and nation, we must separate this from the unconscionable destruction of forests and the habitat they provide for our unique biodiversity.

We have been given the gift of the most amazing, unique and irreplaceable natural heritage anywhere in the world. We must take this responsibility seriously and turn our focus to its preservation for future generations.

A good example of this is the Swift Parrot. This unique and charismatic bird relies on spotted gum forests throughout NSW, particularly on the south coast. This habitat is critical to them, and has already suffered immensely over the past 230+ years at the hands of land clearing for agriculture, and critically, native forestry. The protection of native forests, particularly those managed by the Forestry Corporation of NSW and open for logging under the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Agreement (CIFOA), is critical to avoid this species becoming extinct in the next 20 years – a blink of any eye in the biological history of this continent.

It is in the power of this committee to enact real change that recognises our custodianship of NSW's priceless biodiversity. I strongly urge you to exercise this power for the benefit of ourselves, future generations and the conservation of biological diversity in Australia. I would recommend the following:

- Immediately and permanently suspend all current and planned forestry operations within fire-affected Swift Parrot foraging habitat
- Amend the CIOFA to exclude all known and potential Swift Parrot foraging habitat
- Amend the CIOFA to address the effects of climate change, including increased bush fires and droughts
- Conserve remaining intact native forests and facilitate the expansion and connectivity of old growth native forests
- Develop a forest industry transition plan with a focus on wood production from sustainable and appropriately placed plantations. We have more than enough land already cleared for agriculture in NSW that may be repurposed for sustainable timber for construction, woodchip and other uses.

Before you is a critical choice – act to preserve the unique gifts that we are tasked with looking after for future generations. Or retain the status quo and witness the inevitable death by a thousand cuts of NSW's precious biodiversity.

Yours faithfully,

Jamie McMahon