

Submission
No 197

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

Organisation: Parramatta Climate Action Network

Date Received: 7 June 2021

Parramatta Climate Action Network Submission- NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Long term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry

1) Climate Change

Scientists tell us we must reduce our carbon emissions to prevent catastrophic global heating. Some actions are being taken but not enough and not fast enough. A good way to slow the build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is to increase the sinks. The best way to do this is to preserve the forests that are already standing as they are excellent at sequestering carbon dioxide into the trees by photosynthesis and storing that carbon in the trunks, roots and branches of the trees. As soon as they are cut down the carbon starts to be released as it either decomposes or as the forest products decompose or are burnt. New trees can also be planted but they take many years to grow so are limited in the amount of CO₂ they can sequester.

2) Economics

Native forest logging, ie hardwood, is not sustainable and the taxpayers subsidise the industry. There are only 800 people employed in native forest logging and the government has an obligation to find these workers jobs in less damaging industries. One could be Ecotourism. It is already a big industry and could be made much bigger if the native forests are protected, allowing people to enjoy visiting them to see the magnificent eucalyptus trees as well as the understorey of ferns, mosses and mid-level bushes and trees. Magnificent birds could be seen and if you are lucky and come at the right time mammals such as wombats. Gliders, koalas and antechinus and reptiles such as lizards and if you are lucky even a snake.

3) Environment

When some of us visited Mogo State Forest recently, despite the recovering burnt trees several animals were seen. These recovering forests should not be logged after being burnt in the 2019-20 horrendous fires. The wood is of marginal value with charred trunks that are not acceptable for paper pulp and no good for timber. The trees should be allowed to recover to return the forest to its original condition and to allow all the animals to return.

Forests are entire ecosystems of organisms which contribute to the soils, root systems and living, breathing parts of the carbon cycle of the biosphere.

When logged, we lose the entire composite living organisms, the product of millenia of evolution.

We need whole forests to exist to grow and expand themselves properly. plantation forests after clear felling, are dying things that cannot reconstitute the soil and ecological relationships of the lost species. Trees do not grow properly without the whole ecosystem.

We were told at the conference at Batemans Bay that swift parrots fly over on their way north from Tasmania in autumn. They are critically endangered and need the habitat to rest in during their journey. They are losing habitat trees in Victoria and in NSW and if this continues they will become extinct.

Conclusions

The NSW government has an obligation to its people and especially the young people to mitigate climate change in every way possible, especially by leaving trees in the ground.

Forestry Corporation NSW should only be logging plantation forests, made up of softwoods that make a profit and employ a lot more people. However native forests should not be cleared to be turned into plantation forests.

Animals should be allowed to have the forests as their homes as the forests recover from the catastrophic bushfires. The millions of animals that died in the fires cannot be brought back but we can enable animals to gradually renew their numbers as the forest recovers.

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