

**Submission
No 200**

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

Name: Helen Clemens

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Dear Committee,

Please see below my submission on the conservation of Swift Parrots as a vital consideration for the Inquiry into the long term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry.

I am writing as a NSW resident, voter and bird lover who is deeply concerned about the threats to our native forests from climate change, logging and mining. We are faced with the accelerating decline of biodiversity and the likely extinction of forest dependent species such as the Swift Parrot and its habitat among the Spotted Gum forests of the New South Wales south coast.

Swift Parrots are one of Australia's most endangered birds. They breed only in the forests of Tasmania in summer before migrating to the Australian mainland in autumn where they seek out mature forests to spend the winter, feeding on abundant blossom and lerp.

The forests of New South Wales are critical feeding habitat for these birds. In particular, the Spotted Gum forests of the New South Wales south coast are well-documented as one of the most important mainland foraging areas for Swift Parrots.

The majority of Swift Parrot foraging sites in NSW occur outside of conservation reserves, including within state forests managed by the Forestry Corporation of NSW and open for logging under the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Agreement (CIFOA).

Unless decisive action is taken to protect the remaining forest habitat across their range and improve and fund management actions, Swift Parrots could be extinct within the next two decades.

Climate change and biodiversity loss are the most important – and interdependent – human-induced environmental challenges that society faces today, threatening people's lives and well-being. Nature-based solutions are key to tackling both these challenges. Nature-based solutions such as protecting native forests are key to meeting the UNFCCC's Paris Agreement goals of mitigating and adapting to climate change. Globally, they can provide over 30% of the climate mitigation action needed by 2030 to prevent global temperature rise above 1.5°C, above which the IPCC warns we would see damaging and irreversible impacts to all life on earth.

Intact, biodiverse ecosystems, such as multiage, extensive forests, are particularly efficient and cost-effective nature-based solutions, as they sequester and store significantly more carbon when compared to monoculture tree plantations, agriculture and cleared grazing lands. They are also more resilient and able to adapt to a warming climate.

This inquiry creates the opportunity to recommend critical actions that can help save this species and finally move the timber industry to an environmentally responsible and ecologically sustainable future relying on plantations outside the existing native forest estate. In considering the future of the timber industry in NSW, I urge you to consider the following recommendations.

Recommendation(s):

1. Immediately and permanently suspend all current and planned forestry operations within fire impacted Swift Parrot foraging habitat.
2. Amend the CIOFA to exclude all known and potential Swift Parrot foraging habitat.

3. Amend the CIFOA to address the effects of climate change, including increased bush fires and droughts.
4. Conserve remaining public native forests and facilitate the expansion and connectivity of old growth native forests.
5. Develop a forest industry transition plan with a focus on wood production from sustainable and appropriately placed plantations outside existing native forests.
6. Invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure and opportunities for local communities, tapping into the economic value and services of natural areas in NSW.
7. Invest in the adaptive management of our public native forests, in consultation with private forest owners, to manage our forests using the best available ecological fire management science as we face intensifying climate impacts (drought, fire), and to ensure our local communities are skilled, well equipped and trained to retain our precious forests for their important conservation and ecosystem service values. The Swift Parrot's survival is a symbol for our own. Let's not throw it away because we didn't do our best to save it and the forests that support so much life.

Yours sincerely,
Helen Clemens