

Media Release: Cliff edge plunge for native forest profits as Forestry Corporation engages in damaging post-fire logging

30 March 2021

Public native forests are being logged for a net return of less than 20 cents per mature tree, according to forestry data analysed by the NSW Greens. This appallingly low return coupled with the increasing environmental damage caused by industrial logging especially in the post-fire context confirms the need for an urgent end to this destructive and non-viable industry.

Forestry Corporation have entered South Brooman State Forest after writing their own rules about what is acceptable for post-fire logging. They refused to listen to the EPA who said it was still too soon and we have now found they will be doing it for a shockingly low rate of return.

Analysis of Forestry Corporation figures obtained by Greens MP David Shoebridge show the profit from native forest logging in 2019/20 was a just \$28.00 a hectare. Over the last five years native logging profits have declined from a high of \$225.85 in 2016/17 to \$28.03.

With every hectare of native forest containing an average of yield of 140 mature trees, this equates to an average profit of less than 20 cents for each mature tree logged.

Detailed figures in table form below.

Greens MP and Forests spokesperson David Shoebridge said:

“There has to be a rate of return that the Government will finally decide is too low to keep throwing money at this ‘industry’, less than 20 cents a tree should be that point.

“This low rate of return is in addition to the cost of the fines that Forestry Corporation will be likely to have to pay when the EPA finds their post-fire logging breaches environmental protections.

“No one could look at all the damage caused to forests, waterways and wildlife by native forest logging and say that at \$28 a hectare, it is a worthwhile endeavour.

“We have the Forestry Corporation forcing their way back into the forests on the South Coast despite all the scientific evidence showing this will be environmentally catastrophic.

“It’s particularly obscene when the destruction of each hectare of native forest is carried out for an average profit that would barely be enough to pay for an average pub meal.

“The sheer amount of damage done to log a hectare of forest is enormous, the roads created, the chainsaws, the pollution in surrounding waterways, the log dumps and truck movements create a social and environmental cost that is far in excess of the meagre financial return.

“It’s no surprise that the return is so low when we know these forests are overwhelmingly turned into low-grade woodchips or palings.

“After the fires, everything changed and communities across NSW are asking the Government to

protect their local forests and chart a path out of industrial logging of native forests.

“People want to hike and camp in South Brooman and Shallow Crossing, to kayak down the river to the sound of birdsong, not chainsaws.

“Ending native forest logging would allow the money currently wasted on forestry roads and preparing to destroy nature to be re-directed towards protecting nature and building sustainable jobs,” Mr Shoebridge said.

Media contact: 9230 3030

Hectares logged	\$63.8
FY 2015/16	\$72.9
FY 2016/17	\$59.3
FY 2017/18	Hardwood
FY 2018/19	\$1.2
FY 2019/20	\$5.3
Softwood	\$3.5
7387.45	\$0.9
7924.5	\$0.4
7776	
7958.18	Net Income per hectare - including CSO
10907.66	FY 2015/16
Hardwood	FY 2016/17
17878	FY 2017/18
23467	FY 2018/19
20068	FY 2019/20
20730	Softwood
14271	\$8000.05
	\$7785.98
Net profit-including CSO (millions)	\$8204.73
FY 2015/16	\$9160.39
FY 2016/17	\$5436.54
FY 2017/18	Hardwood
FY 2018/19	\$67.12
FY 2019/20	\$225.85
Softwood	\$174.40
\$59.1	\$43.42
\$61.7	\$28.03

Kym Chapple
Senior Advisor
Policy | Communications | Legislation
02 9230 3030
Office of Greens MP David Shoebridge

Our office is on the land of the Gadigal people