

**Submission
No 141**

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

Name: Ms Skye Etherington

Date Received: 27 May 2021

I write this submission for the future of our precious and unique native forests, with the hope that his time, the voice and value of nature is heard by you the parliament of this land.

I have lived on the far south coast of NSW for over 20 years and seen first hand the continued decimation of native forests to a regime that is driven by woodchopping.

The local timber mills in our area have all closed as the State forests do not give quotas to these mills for saw logs, instead, sending 90% of our forests to Eden to be woodchopper and sent offshore.

This is a madness that needs to stop.

1. forests are biodiverse systems that will help us get through the changing climate impacts that are already being felt around the globe, but particularly here in arid Australia.

2. The 19-20 bushfires hit NSW state forests hard – impacting both biodiversity and timber supply. Forestry Corporation NSW continues to log precious native forests and regularly breaches environmental conditions. Communities in timber regions don't have certainty for the future. The current situation is unsustainable.

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed amended rules for logging to provide additional protections immediately following the fires, but FCNSW has abandoned these additional protections and has returned to logging under the previous rules (CIFOAs). This will spell disaster for our forests and wildlife.

- The patches of unburnt or lightly burnt forests that are threatened by logging are critical, often tiny, refuges for wildlife

- An EPA review released in September 2020 found:
“Fauna populations surviving in fire refuges in state forests are at risk of elimination by timber harvesting under the normal CIFOA which could prevent recovery, and cause catastrophic population decline in species such as the Koala, Greater Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider.”

- 1.8 million hectares of habitat and feed trees were destroyed during the fires.ⁱⁱ The forest which remains must be protected.

3. The Forestry Corporation doesn't have a social license to log our native forests.

These are public assets, with the industry constantly running at a loss and heavily subsidised .

This money could be better spent on creating jobs that have a lasting future.

Jobs in tourism, and in the creation of fine timber products that show the value of our unique hard woods.

4. The wildlife of our area is special as is the cultural heritage and stories that are part of this landscape.

Then there is also the obvious benefit of trees in holding carbon, and assisting us to mitigate the carbon footprint of industry.

. Our native forests are worth more standing.

I have witnessed the destruction of rocky hills in Tantawangalo forest and Mumbulla forests, and the destruction of creek beds and endangered species habitat in Yurammie near Wyndham.

Our water catchments are also very vulnerable to the impacts of logging.

The maps today show the broad scale that logging has traversed in the 20 years I have lived in this area.

It Must Stop

I ask that there be an immediate end to public native forest logging.

That the chipmill at Eden is closed and converted into a true timber mill that values the unique features of Australian hardwood trees.

this site could become the basis for a furniture industry that could put Eden on the map and provide training and jobs for those already in the industry.

A local timber industry, that values the whole tree and relies on ecosystems being intact and healthy.

An expansion of the plantation estate, with a goal of a 100% plantation-based timber industry.

Transfer of the most ecologically significant state forests into the national

parks estate.

Ending native forest logging, and expanding the conservation estate, would benefit our local environment, community and economy, putting us on the map as a beautiful and natural place to come and visit.

Our community can only prosper if the long term conflict over timber and forests is resolved.

I was in a rally 20 years ago asking for Plantations Not Native forest logging.

I really think it is time now to act.

yours sincerely,

Skye Etherington

Wallagoot lane

Bega Valley NSW