

INQUIRY INTO 2024 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NET ZERO COMMISSION

Organisation: Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Risingtide Australia, 350.org, Australian Conservation Foundation, WWF-Australia

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Nature Conservation Council

The voice for nature in NSW

Steven Ryan
Nature Campaigner
Nature Conservation Council of NSW

14th February, 2025

Dear Joint Standing Committee

The Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and the undersigned groups welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Net Zero Future. Please accept the attached statement on behalf of the following organisations campaigning for substantial action on emission reductions.

- Nature Conservation Council of NSW
- Greenpeace Australia Pacific
- Risingtide Australia
- 350.org
- Australian Conservation Foundation
- WWF-Australia

The attached statement outlines a shared position on the need to end native forest logging in NSW to realise the multiple benefits including: emission reductions, benefits for biodiversity, water, weed and fire management.

NCC is the state's peak environment organisation. We represent over 200 environment groups across NSW. The undersigned groups represent many thousands of Australians.

In addition to the call to end native forest logging made in the attached statement, there is a clear need for more transparent reporting on emissions resulting from native forest logging in both the public and private forest estate.

NCC is also making a separate submission to the committee on a broader range of issues and recommendations. This statement can be considered as complementary to Section 3 of the NCC submission dealing with Land-use sector decarbonisation opportunities.

Your Sincerely
Steve Ryan



Ending native forest logging is crucial climate action

We urge the NSW Government to end native forest logging by the end of 2025. The government must implement a fair and just transition to an industry based on sustainable conversion-free plantations and wood manufacturing.

An end to native forest logging could contribute approximately 3%¹ emissions cuts and be a significant step toward achieving the state's legislated emissions reduction targets of 50% by 2030 and 70% by 2035.

Protecting and restoring forests provides cost effective nature-based solutions to the climate and nature crises that would enable NSW to demonstrate strong action under the Paris Agreement and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Protecting forests as carbon sinks must occur together with a rapid transition from fossil fuels to renewables. Australia must do both.

Preserving intact native forests will be key to reducing emissions as intact native forests store significantly more carbon than logged native forests. It must also be recognised that logging native forests causes large amounts of emissions.

Increased carbon storage in native forests protected from logging is included in state and national carbon accounts. Carbon does not have to be traded to achieve this benefit.

¹ [Calculations for emissions from native forest logging in New South Wales](#): 3,603,876 tonnes of CO₂ e per year (averaged over the last 5 years; 2019-2022) NSW net emissions from [Net Zero Report 2024](#)

Australia committed at the Climate COP28 to end deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.²

Expert forest ecological research shows industrial logging causes forest degradation, including by making forests more fire-prone and reducing carbon stocks.

Preserving and enhancing forests can make a considerable reduction to Australia's carbon footprint at very low cost. Protecting forests from logging is the low hanging fruit of NSW emissions reductions.

Climate change is placing enormous pressures on all our natural systems. Native forests face a multitude of threats as a result of climate change. Increased intensity and frequency of wildfires has already had profound effects on our forest wildlife and on timber resources. Maintenance and restoration of native forest ecosystems and connections between forest ecosystems will be vital in securing their long term ability to adapt to the effects of a warming climate, avoid tipping points and retain their large carbon stocks over the long term.

Communities are already suffering from the effects of a warming climate, with the 2019/20 wildfires the clearest indication of the future that awaits if we do not do all we can to slow, and reverse CO2 emissions.

Fact Sheet:

- The harvestable NSW public native forest estate is estimated to be capable of generating 23.7MtCO₂-e over 15 years³
- Logging of native forests in NSW is estimated to result in 3.6 million tonnes of CO₂ being released every year⁴.
- Native forest logging provides only around 10% of building timbers in NSW, with the other 90% coming from plantation softwoods.
- Most native forest logs are used for low value products, such as woodchips, pallets and tomato stakes.
- Power poles can be replaced by composite materials and even by softwoods

² UN FCCC, 13 December 2023, *First global stocktake*. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement Fifth session, United Arab Emirates, 30 November to 12 December 2023, available at [Documents | UNFCCC](#), see para 33.

³ BRIEFING PAPER NSW Forest Futures- Conservation, Credits, Restoration. The Australian Climate and Biodiversity Foundation (ACBF)

⁴ [Calculations for emissions from native forest logging in New South Wales](#): 3,603,876 tonnes of CO₂ e per year (averaged over the last 5 years; 2019-2022)