



House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Climate Change, Environment and the Arts
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

ccea.reps@aph.gov.au

Re: Inquiry into climate change and biodiversity.

Dear Committee,

Biodiversity, is key to the evolution of carbon life on earth

The relentless drive towards monocultures by human societies, and of human society, is against complexity and with it, resilience and life itself.

Resilience allows adaption and with it planetary health, critical to the biofeedback systems scientists have called Gaia.

Destroy the diversity of nature and we destroy our planet's ability to sustain our fellow creatures and us.

Australia's southeastern forests are being destroyed by a patchwork of uses: agricultural monocultures, urbanization, and forestry on both private and State forests.

From the air this can be clearly seen even in the comparatively forested areas of East Gippsland and South East NSW with National Parks mainly occupying steep slopes and poor soils whilst poorly funded.

State forests under Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) are a failure

- They have been over logged and timber supplies are declining.
- Income has not covered costs for this public, i.e., "free" resource.
- Species losses are endemic; e.g., the recently surveyed coastal koala population of 30-50 has no chance of increasing whilst a patchwork of logging continues. Whilst hunting, agriculture and urban development were the original cause of the dramatic decline in this once numerous animal – "the trees rained koala pee" the ongoing logging, mainly for loss making woodchips (95% in Mumbulla State Forest,) is now the culprit of what will be the demise of this one of two remaining coastal koala populations.
- RFAs are not "giving certainty to industry"; they are killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

- Removing the EPBC Act and the failure of successive Environment Ministers to acknowledge the Hawke Review shows governments that are in thrall of the Forestry Industry.
- RFA's fail to acknowledge carbon or water; they should be terminated.

The recent announcement of complimentary measures to the Clean Energy Future climate action plans is the first ray of hope:

- Biodiversity Fund and Carbon Farming Initiative both mention native forests: public and private;
- Regional Development funding is also a way to change forestry from the 20C model of industrial scale logging to new plantation and recycling based timber and fire supplies.
- Changing farming models, with revegetation of streams and hills, including planting trees for future crafted building and furniture uses whilst providing habitat corridors is the way of the future.
- Exclusion of native forests from Renewable Energy Targets (RETs) needs to be accompanied by measures to prevent local use and exports of native forests for the production of power or fuels.

Forests are essential to landscape and coastal water health. A whole of landscape approach is the only way we can begin to recover biodiversity, fresh water, and soil carbon and halt the change from fertile beauty to barren ugliness.

The aridification of southern Australia is a grim future; deforestation and degradation including burning off, perhaps starting from fire stick farming practices is the cause of the lack of rain from the great stream of moisture of the Indian Ocean. South America awaits the same fate as Australia with its deserts, from clearing and logging.

The most important action of our times is to stop the loss of biodiversity; all else will follow from a healthy, beautiful environment.

I support the submissions from Australian Forests and Climate Alliance (AFCA and Boobook.)

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