

# Ending regional forest agreements

## Cover sheet for email or post submissions

Please complete this form and provide with your submission if you are submitting via email or post.

Note: Use Ctrl+Click to follow hyperlinks

### Your details:

Given name

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Family name

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Organisation (if you belong to one)

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Please select **one** of the following:

- I confirm that my completed questionnaire does not contain sensitive information and can be published in full on the Department of Primary Industries website.
- My completed questionnaire should **NOT** be published on the Department of Primary Industries website.
- My completed questionnaire should **only** be published on the Department of Primary Industries website once my personal details are removed.

**Please complete page 2 as well.**

Please select your interest/s with extending the RFA:

- Forest management framework in New South Wales
- Sustainable access to timber resources
- Research and development
- Conservation reserve system
- Threatened species
- Aboriginal connections to forests
- Heritage values
- Employment in forest and wood products industries
- Recreation and tourism
- Mineral and petroleum interests
- Other interests (please list below)

I want to see an end to native forest logging and do not wish to see a renewal of any Regional Forest Agreements. My submission to DPI focusses on *how to end* the industry rather than *why*. Plenty of other submissions are providing more than enough evidence to establish that its days are numbered.

My starting point is that the industry cannot survive; we urgently need to recognise that and ensure that it ends in a fair and environmentally sound way.

#### Privacy statement

Please read the privacy statement for information about how the Department manages your personal information: <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy>

#### Send your completed submission and cover sheet to:

Email: [forests@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:forests@industry.nsw.gov.au)

Mail:

NSW Regional Forest Agreements

DPI Forestry

Department of Primary Industries

GPO Box 5477

Sydney NSW 2001

Alternatively, online submissions can be made via:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/have-your-say/>  
[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au)

NSW urgently needs clear strategies and effective measures to end the native forest woodchipping industry in south east NSW. My submission focusses on *how to end* the industry rather than *why*. Plenty of other submissions are providing more than enough evidence to establish that the industry must recognise reality and move to a plantation based future. We urgently need to ensure that it ends in a fair and environmentally sound way.

For the south coast of NSW (Eden and Southern), the first round of RFAs have given us almost 20 years of the most intensive native forest logging in NSW, record woodchip exports, more threatened species and a growing financial burden on NSW taxpayers.

I can substantiate any of these statements with publicly available figures if required.

### Background

1. The first Regional Forest Agreements date from the era of the chainsaw. Within a few short years, we were in the era of the mechanical harvester<sup>[1]</sup>. Now, it's predicted that robots will soon take on the dangerous and often remote work of logging native forests.

This is no time to be watering down environmental protections and weakening compliance.

2. The NSW Regional Forest Agreements Implementation Report 2004–2014 provides an overwhelming case for transition out of native forest logging to plantations. Plantations were not part of the first RFAs and yet, perhaps 70% of the Implementation Report is about plantations, including virtually all of the positive material.

That speaks for itself.

3. Few now doubt that the industry is living on borrowed time. Governments can legislate for anything they like (eternal life?) but that doesn't make it real. To legislate for sustainable and economically viable native forest logging, especially for woodchips denies history and denies current reality.

### Recommendations

It is clear that there is an urgent need for a clear and workable plan to manage an exit from the woodchipping industry. When the time inevitably comes, woodchippers must not be allowed to simply walk away from the environmental destruction they have caused or their obligations to workers and local communities as so many mining companies have done in the past. Action to prevent this is overdue and needs to start now.

Some obvious measures would include, but not be limited to:

- a. A remediation bond payable by the owners of the Eden woodchip mill to cover costs of restoring the chipmill site for new benign purposes once the chipmill closes.
- b. A levy on the Forestry Corporation per hectare logged to provide for the restoration of native forests logged between now and the closure of the native forest industry.
- c. A water quality levy imposed on all logging operations undertaken in estuary catchments such as Wonboyn and river catchments.
- d. A road maintenance fee to ensure that roads used by log trucks cease to be a financial burden on other road users, councils and taxpayers until logging ends.
- e. A retraining fund payable by industry employers to entitle all workers currently employed in the logging industry to a retraining package to acquire new skills.

- f. A fire control levy payable by the industry to the Rural Fire Service per hectare logged, in recognition of the fact that dense regrowth forests for the first few decades after logging are more fire prone than mature, unlogged forests.
- g. Twofold Bay seabed damage prevention and remediation levy on woodchip carriers using loading facilities at the chipmill, to compensate for degradation of habitat of species such as the weedy sea dragon and green sea turtle by woodchip carriers.
- h. If any RFAs are renewed, Wood Supply Agreements should be for realistic timeframes (no more than 5 years), should not contain “take or pay” clauses and not carry unwarranted penalties for any early cessation of access to wood supply.