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I strongly believe that the current RFAs in New South Wales should not be renewed. They have failed in their objectives to provide for conservation, provide for ecologically sustainable managements and use of forests in the RFA regions and to provide a successful and thriving timber industry.

Broadly, all three RFAs have resulted in significant loss of native forests, destruction of protected species of flora and fauna and, for many years, native forest logging has operated at an economic loss. The current RFAs account for the value of forests in a narrow way, which has contributed to their failure. It is time to move away from this form of forest management to a model that measures the value of forests beyond what timber they can provide.

A key element of the failure of the RFAs can be linked to lack of accountability in forest management. There have been continued breaches of codes that are aimed at protecting and preserving flora and fauna in our forests, often with little consequence for Forestry Corporation. Many of these breaches have only been documented and uncovered because of the ongoing work of conservationists. The Government has failed both in their role to regulate and review logging operations, and to adequately penalise and address the continued non-compliance of logging operators.

This lax approach to regulation and proper logging practice can be seen to be driven, at least in part, by the unrealistic wood supply contracts that the Government has entered into. The pressure of these contracts has been areas of forest felled that should have been protected, and many protected and endangered species destroyed or damaged. This again highlights the need to move away from a model of forest management which measures value nearly solely on timber production, so that everyone in New South Wales can enjoy the benefits that these public resources can provide.

The RFAs are a failed model of forest management. There needs to be significant change to how forestry resources are managed going forward to ensure the success and viability of our environment, climate and industry.

Key suggestions:

1. Stop native forest logging

Native forest logging is both an ecologically and economically unsound practice. Moving away from logging these public native forests is the most important change that is needed in forest management.

Native forests provide significant ecological value. They act as a filter for water, promote biodiversity and are the home of many of our iconic animals. They should be preserved and enjoyed as forests, rather than logged at an economic loss.

Native forest logging does not provide that jobs or economic benefits that that RFAs sought to achieve. In 2009-2012, Forestry Corporation lost \$85 million in native forest logging operations. In 2015, The Greens obtained figures from Forestry Corporation that showed that NSW taxpayers had lost more than \$40 million from State Native Forests over the previous 4 years. Though Forestry

Corporation has recently reported a profit in this area, the past accounts show that it has been a financial drain on tax payers for many years.

In addition, as of 2011, the forestry industry in NSW only employed a total of 2,126 workers, either directly or through a support service. Of this number, it is likely that only 600 were directly employed in the native forest industry. This amounts to less than 0.1% of the total workforce. It is clear from these figures that the employment and economic benefits are not able to justify the significant ecological and heritage loss that is caused by logging public native forests.

2. Allow for the termination of any forestry agreement after a five year term, if the agreement has failed to meet its objectives.

There should be a clause included in any future forestry agreements that allows them to be terminated after five years, if they have failed to meet their stated objectives. This will ensure that ineffective agreements do not continue when they are not meeting performance indicators.

3. Recognise the value of forests beyond timber production and investigate alternative ways to use state forests.

The forests of NSW are a public resource and vital ecosystem that serve every person in this state. Protecting and preserving these public assets can provide much greater value than just the timber they currently provide. In moving forward with public forest management, it is incumbent upon the Government to assess and investigate the wider value that forests provide.

Forests play an important part in regulating and maintaining water and soil quality, preserving biodiversity and capturing carbon. They make a significant contribution to the health of our ecosystem and environment. This value can only be maintained by moving away from logging in our native public forests.

Our forests also present a significant economic opportunity through tourism. In 2016, nature-based travellers made up 82.9% of visitors to NSW, with national parks and state forests the second most popular class of destination in the state. Public forests offer recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike, through popular activities like bushwalking, photography, bird watching, camping and trail bike riding.

Shifting the way we use forests, from logging to tourism, will allow for forest to continue to be a source of economic gain. This has the additional benefit of also preserving our forests, giving the people of NSW both the ecological and economic benefits of these public assets.

4. Establish a Great Koala national park.

In NSW, the iconic koala is listed as vulnerable, with nearly every population on the east coast in decline. Habitat destruction from logging native forests is a significant threat to the species. Koalas need mature growth trees and bushland to survive. Logging native forests has led to the fragmentation of their habitat, forcing them into smaller and smaller areas – where there is often insufficient food and water.

Establishing a Great Koala National Park would be a significant step towards preserving this species and changing how forests are managed in NSW. By adding 175,000 hectares of state forest to the

existing national parks in the Coffs Harbour hinterland, the NSW Government could establish a 315,000 hectare koala reserve. This area contains both koala populations and habitats of national significance, and offers the best chance of a successful conservation effort.

It also offers significant economic and employment opportunities for the region. A recent study by economists in Victoria found that the similar Great Forest National Park proposal on the outskirts of Melbourne could generate up to 750 full-time jobs, attract an extra 400,000 visitors annually and add more than \$70 million to economy each year.

A Great Koala National Park offers the opportunity to shift towards a model of forest management that allows the people of NSW to enjoy these public resources, while protecting and preserving the inherent value of these forests.