The RFAs should not be extended. It would be criminal vandalism to allow continued intensive logging of native forests. That would be a travesty. All the available evidence indicates that native forests cannot be intensively logged without adversely compromising the qualities that are important in remnant native forests.

Commercial intensive logging should complete the transition to plantations. The work and expertise of the acknowledged scientific experts in the varied fields of ecology and ecology such as Professors Brendan Mackey, David Lindenmayer and Tony Norton show how intensive logging destroys essential natural characteristics of native forests as well as the soil they grow in and the hydrological systems dependent on them. The deadly consequences for native animals – especially, but not only, hollow dependent creatures – are tragic at both individual and collective levels.

I am writing in response to consultation on the NSW Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) and to state my opposition to their renewal. The RFAs are a failed model for forest management.

We are living within the sixth extinction. Today, there are over 1000 threatened species and 100 threatened ecological communities in NSW alone. Australia's carbon emissions are increasing, threatening the health of our community. We know that trees provide the most effective form of carbon capture and storage, yet the RFAs continue to allow the logging of NSW's public native forests.

RFAs mean that the public native forest logging industry does not have to comply with the usual environmental impact assessments under Commonwealth environment laws. While every other industry must comply with these laws, logging in habitat for federally listed threatened species occurs routinely in areas covered by RFAs.

RFAs were initially developed as a model to facilitate multiple uses of public native forests, including timber extraction and conservation, and to underpin in a stable forestry industry. They have failed to meet these aims as the following facts attest:

Populations of forest animals - including koalas - have plummeted over the life of RFAs;

Ecosystem processes in forests, like the carbon and water cycles, have been disrupted;

Hollow-bearing trees, key to the survival of wildlife, have been reduced by logging;

Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management has not occurred;

Forestry job numbers have steadily declined, and subsides keep logging financially viable;

The NSW taxpayer has repeatedly footed the bill to buy out logging contracts.

The overdue progress report on the second and third five-yearly reviews fails to provide adequate data for the public, NSW and Commonwealth governments to assess the performance of the RFAs. It also fails to take account of new knowledge, particularly on climate change and its increasing threat to ecological systems, biodiversity and human wellbeing – social, health, mental, and economic.

We know from polling that the vast majority of people support protecting public native forests for wildlife, water supplies, carbon stores and recreation. And most support the creation of new national parks to protect koalas. A small but noisy and influential group support the logging of forests for timber, woodchips and biomass burning.

In light of these comments, I recommend that the NSW and Commonwealth governments:

1. Not renew RFAs because they are a failed model for forest management;

2. Heed the accumulated evidence and use the expiry of the RFAs to trigger a just transition of workers out of the native forest logging industry; and

3. Protect public native forests to ensure our wildlife, water and carbon stores are not massacred by the inevitable destructive consequences of intensive commercial logging.

RFAs were a well-intended effort to reconcile logging and conservation. Given the accumulated evidence that they haven't worked, rolling over the RFAs will constitute a decision to entirely favour the logging industry over the public interest. This will prolong conflict and hasten the demise of threatened species. I urge you not to take this path.