

Australian Forest Network Position Statement

We call on the Federal and State Governments to immediately stop logging and all other forms of degradation in our public native forests.

Australia now faces the existential crises of catastrophic climate change and biodiversity loss. Species are hurtling towards extinction as they face a rapidly changing climate and habitat destruction. Forest-dependent species are especially under threat following the catastrophic 2019/2020 bushfires in eastern Australia.

Scientists and economists around the world are calling for immediate and far-reaching action to address climate change and biodiversity loss. One action that has strong support from experts, as well as overwhelming community support, is to stop the logging of native forests.

Australia's native forests are ecologically unique and provide invaluable benefits to our society. These benefits include carbon storage, water supply, erosion control, pollination, nutrient recycling and biodiversity. Native forests are culturally, economically and spiritually significant to First Nations Peoples and provide all Australians with recreational and spiritual benefits.

A significant area of Australia's native forest is on public land. That is, land directly under the responsibility and management of governments on behalf of the public.

Forests on public land must be managed in the public interest and for the public good and not logged and degraded to benefit a few.

Conservation of privately owned forests needs to be encouraged with financial incentives.

By protecting our remaining forests, and restoring degraded areas, we can actively address the biodiversity and climate change crises. Protecting and restoring forests will significantly reduce Australia's greenhouse emissions and help to store and sequester carbon. It will also secure and improve habitat for Australia's unique wildlife and create numerous job opportunities.

We call on State and Federal Governments to:

1. Immediately stop the logging and all other forms of degradation in our public native forests;
2. Develop stronger regulations and incentive programmes to encourage private landholders to protect and restore forests;
3. Invest in the management of forests for biodiversity, carbon storage and catchment integrity, including the restoration of degraded native forests. This will create a wide range of regional jobs in forest management;
4. Recognise the rights and interests of First Nations in the public forest estate and genuinely consult and negotiate on future forest management;
5. End public subsidies across the logging industry;
6. Ban the use of native forest wood as biomass for electricity generation;
7. Invest in ecologically-sensitive farm forestry plantings for biodiversity and timber.

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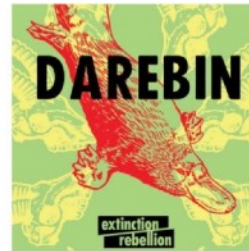
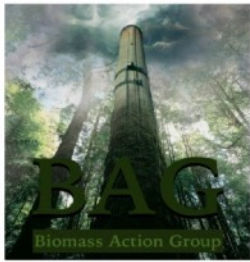
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