

## Native Vegetation Regulation Review

Private Native Forestry is the “sustainable logging of native vegetation on private property”.

We are owners of a small sawmill on the mid-north coast of N.S.W., employing 11 people from the local area, and we rely solely on log supply from private native forests in and around Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Kempsey, Laurieton and Taree.

We believe that the current Code of Practice is working for us on the properties that we log on a 5 to 6 year rotation, often returning to the same properties over periods of 30 to 40 years.

As we log conservatively using single tree selection, thinning not clearing to maintain our timber supply we feel that any effect on endangered species (koalas) is minimal. The main koala food trees as listed in PNF Code grow mainly in swamps in the coastal area (which we are not allowed to log anyway). The listed food trees are usually of little or no commercial value for sawmilling and those that are do not grow well close to the coast. The current Code also includes exclusion zones in koala habitat areas with identification of habitat trees, recruitment trees and food trees. PNF is not allowed to encroach on these areas at present so we see no need to change this

We need to see some trust shown to landowners and loggers, that they can identify core koala habitat areas and then act responsibly in the interests of the environment. Property owners and loggers are willing to work with OEHL to make sure that current restrictions are followed as we reject any radical change.

If new mapping is undertaken, can landowners be involved, and will there be a appeals process? If koala Habitat areas are found on properties that are already under approvals from OEHL, won't that prove that the threatened species is not under threat in these areas, and would these approvals be rescinded? Will there be shown a difference between inhabited and uninhabited areas?

There will have to be compensation allotted to both landowners and sawmillers for the loss of income, as the landowners depend on their timber resource to help them through times of drought and flood, besides supplementing their incomes at other times.

If set rules were to apply in a reasonable manner then landholders and loggers would be more likely to co-operate in the mapping process. The mapping accuracy would always be questioned if another party was introduced to carry it out.

The greatest dangers to koalas are wildfires and urban development. We submit that logging reduces the risk of wildfires as the maintenance of snig tracks etc help clear fire breaks. Logging cannot be compared to urban development, which in a lot of cases results in the complete isolation of koala groups, leading to diseases and stress.

We hope that commonsense will prevail in this matter and that due consideration will be given to our submission.



RM Cooper,  
Director.