



The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

16 December 2019

Dear Premier,

Bushfire emergency response: Request for public native forest logging moratorium

We call on the NSW Government to declare an immediate moratorium on logging in public native forests across NSW until a comprehensive independent assessment of the impacts of the fires on species and habitat is undertaken, publicly reported and wood supply contracts are reassessed.

This developing crisis is set to worsen and requires an emergency response.

Fires have now burned 2.7 million hectares in NSW this bushfire season. The impact on many species has been extreme and is ongoing. The full scale of wildlife losses will probably never be known, but they will surely number in the millions. It has been estimated that one million animals were killed in Victoria's Black Saturday fires, which affected an area one-sixth the size of NSW fires.

The state's threatened koala populations have been hit hard. The inquiry into koala populations and habitat in NSW heard evidence that more than 2,000 koalas may have died; including as many as 300 in the Port Macquarie region, up to 700 in the forests near Rappville and two coastal koala colonies in the Clarence Valley.

As of the end of November, 40% of the State Forest estate across the North Coast had been burnt and yet the NSW Forestry Corporation intends to continue harvesting operations. Most of these

operations are slated for regions heavily burned and include forests that have provided refuge for animals fleeing the fires.

The effects of the catastrophic fires have been so far-reaching that allowing further loss of habitat and impact on native species would be unconscionable. There needs to be a full assessment of the impact of the fires on the entire forest network, on threatened species and ecological communities, and reappraisal of existing wood supply commitments. Without this information, the sustainability of harvesting operations cannot be guaranteed.

This assessment must ensure sufficient remaining native habitat is maintained to protect species and ecological processes.

These unprecedented fires have jeopardised the long-term viability of threatened species populations and forest ecosystems in several areas. We believe the developing crisis justifies the use of the force majeure clause of the Wood Supply Agreements as fire has significantly reduced the availability of native timber across State Forests. These clauses, designed for extreme events such as these, will ensure that public money is not spent on FCNSW being unable to meet current Wood Supply Agreement obligations.

We acknowledge that any moratorium could have some impacts on timber industry workers directly associated with native forest logging and their communities. We therefore call on the government to ensure logging industry workers are supported during this process, either with alternative employment options, financial assistance or other worthwhile alternatives. We stand ready to engage constructively with the industry and government to achieve this goal.

Representatives from the Stand Up For Nature Alliance would like to meet with you to discuss putting a moratorium on logging. Please contact Shirley Hall at the Nature Conservation Council (shall@nature.org.au, 02 9516 1488) to arrange a suitable time. Thank you for your time and consideration.

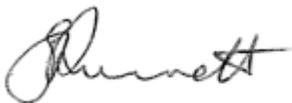
Yours sincerely,



Chris Gambian
Chief Executive Officer
Nature Conservation Council of NSW



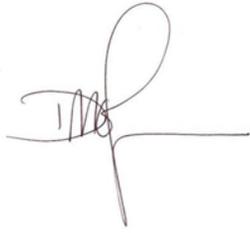
Erica Martin
Chief Executive Officer
Humane Society International



Gary Dunnett
CEO
National Parks Association of NSW



Peter Cooper
Markets Campaign Manager
The Wilderness Society



Dermot O'Gorman
Chief Executive Officer
WWF – Australia



Leanne Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
NSW WIRES



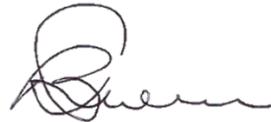
Rebecca Keeble
Regional Director
IFAW Oceania



Dailan Pugh
President
North East Forest Alliance



Graham Quint
Conservation Director
National Trust



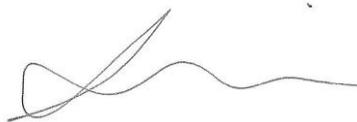
Dr Roslyn Irwin
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Friends of the Koala



Keith Muir
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Saul Dean
Urban Sustainability Campaigner
Total Environment Centre



Samantha Vine
Head of Conservation
Birdlife Australia

In the spirit of respecting and strengthening partnerships with Australia's First Peoples, we would like to acknowledge the spiritual, social, cultural and economic importance of lands and waters to Aboriginal peoples. We offer our deepest appreciation and respect for the First Peoples' continued connection and responsibility to the lands and waters in this country, and pay our respects to First Nations Peoples and their Elders past and present who hold the authority, memories, knowledge and traditions of living Aboriginal cultures.