

## Great Southern Forest Executive Brief

The Great Southern Forest proposal centres on managing south eastern NSW publicly owned native forests for climate stabilisation and carbon sequestration rather than timber extraction, thereby reflecting relevant, contemporary values of forests.

The Great Southern Forest proposal is a widely researched, solutions-based initiative for the magnificent carbon and biodiversity dense south eastern native forests. It offers nature-based solutions to critical national and global problems at low cost and with great benefit in terms of climate stabilisation, environmental and economic success, increased resilience and biodiversity, regional employment, Indigenous participation and social coherence. It offers a new model of forest management which is relevant and transferable nationally and internationally. The Great Southern Forest can reduce forest fragmentation thereby equipping forests as a whole with the connectedness and resilience to withstand and ameliorate a disrupted climate.

The vision is to link existing state native forests, national parks and private forests for the healthy resilience of a connected landscape – importantly, this is not a proposal for further reserves.

GSF proposal recognises:

- that forests are vital for homeostatic climate stabilisation of the planet
- that there are sufficient existing mature plantations to meet all of Australia's timber needs; some are state owned and located in the south eastern region
- that while the Regional Forest Agreement process provides a timely window of attention on native forests, its assumptions and outcomes are wildly outdated in the light of scientific evidence and pressing world and regional problems
- that the present system of management of south eastern native forests for timber extraction has overseen large environmental, economic, social and employment losses with inestimable damage to soil, water, biodiversity, wildlife and habitat with attendant brakes on social and economic well-being
- that a shift in consciousness to an expanded perspective is required and is ripe to be accepted

### **GSF Recommends that the NSW and Commonwealth Governments:**

Accept the principle that management of public native state forests in south eastern NSW changes from timber extraction to climate mitigation and adaptation, and carbon sequestration,

Cease native forest logging and woodchipping in NSW SE state forests,

Prioritise forest preservation and restoration in the 432,575ha of SE State forests, and

That the NSW government commence negotiations to secure carbon credits for native forest carbon sequestration from the Australian Commonwealth Government's Emission Reductions Fund with the proviso that any applicable carbon credit revenue be directed to regional forest restoration and nature-based tourism infrastructure and definitely not to any further logging.