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# NSW Bird Atlassers Inc

*A group monitoring birds in New South  
Wales*

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Cypress Forests Assessment  
Natural Resources Commission  
GPO Box 4206  
SYDNEY 2001

22 March, 2010

Dear Sir

Attention: Pia Zadnik and Daniel Hoenig

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the assessment of the south-western cypress state forests, and congratulations for such an initiative. The emphasis on ecological and environmental values that you have stressed is very gratifying.

The following key issues are of particular interest and concern to NSW Bird Atlassers for comment:

3. We believe these are most important attributes of state forests and endorse this step. There may be areas not previously mapped that some members are aware of. In this case we will certainly advise you.

4, 5. Some concerns could be raised on management of both black and white cypress pine in new National Parks. Lack of active management could be having an effect on ecological values, for example open grassy areas for ground foraging birds. On private lands it would be up to an agreement of some kind for management to be changed in these tenures.

9. To maximise benefits from private land forests perhaps agreements could be prepared that would give monetary as well as physical assistance to private forest managers, in exchange for producing suitable timber for State Forests in the future, thus improving environmental and economic benefits. (see your ref. p25. Journal Article Antos, MJ and Bennett, AF (2005), How important are different types of temperate woodlands for ground-foraging birds? *Wildlife Research*, Vol. 32, pp. 557-572) .

10, 11, 13, 15. The ecological value of cypress in state forests, as well as on leasehold land and other crown lands, cannot be overstated. Local communities can vouch for the numerous values provided by state forests, for example the protection of fauna, for recreation, and for commercial purposes, such as apiary. A mixture of different age trees is important for retaining ongoing ecological values. Vegetation connectivity could be improved by understandings with neighbouring properties, in exchange for the

services that the forests provide such as hydrological processes, as well as insect control by protecting habitat for birds. Ecological resilience of cypress can be maintained by more careful management in some forests where logging may have been too severe, resulting in values for fauna being slow to recover.

16, 17, 18, 19. Some state forests are more highly valued for particular reasons. For instance Back Yamma is of importance because of regular sightings of Regent Honeyeater and Gilbert's Whistler; Cumbine shelters *Eucalyptus intertexta* and a number of rare flora; and Coradgery is a rare jewel. A community's association with cypress forests gives certainty of employment and continuance of knowledge and expertise gathered over many years and passed on to others. Because of this, the community guards the forest as their own and comes to understand better the many benefits that forests supply; and that degrading processes, such as the detrimental effect on both flora and fauna of overgrazing by feral and domestic goats as in Cumbine State Forest, also contributes to erosion and the spread of undesirable weeds.

20, 21, 22. Opportunities should be sought to find ways to increase the resource base, not just to supply the current market demand, but for demand into the future. Such expansion could also be a means to safeguard ecological values, as land clearing and other threatening processes continue to put the long-term survival of many of our bushland birds in jeopardy (see *The State of Australia's Birds* 2008 produced by Birds Australia). Three woodland birds, Flame Robin, Scarlet Robin and Varied Sittella, have recently been listed as Vulnerable Species under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 (Part 1 of Schedule 2) by NSW Scientific Committee, together with Little Eagle and Spotted Harrier. The market outlook for cypress products far exceeds demand, as far as I am aware. In Key Issue 22 there will be ways found to the answer to this question, some of which have been expressed by NSW Bird Atlassers in this submission.

24, 25. More careful management of stock agistment will be needed. Lower summer rainfall that is predicted will impact on forests, as many trees will die. Increasing the area of mixed cypress forest could help to counteract this.

Yours sincerely

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