I am opposed to almost every aspect of the new Coastal Integrated Forest Operations Approvals (IFOAs), including the proposed changes around landscape “protections”, wildlife habitat “protections”, the new technology and boundary rules and the scale of timber harvesting as described in the “multi-scale landscape approach”. Each of these proposed frameworks represents an unacceptable further degradation of publicly owned native forests in the region where I live. Why am I concerned about the new IFOAs? Purely and simply because I have a passionate regard and respect my local forests, and I know and understand the true value of native forests as places that provide essential habitat to wildlife, produce oxygen, act as carbon sinks, control pollution and prevent erosion. We have so little native forest remaining in Australia, it is absolute essential that we preserve what we have left.
Q17. What parts of the draft Coastal IFOA do you think have a positive outcome on the management of environmental values or the production of sustainable timber? Why?

I do not believe the current draft Coastal IFOA will have any positive outcomes for the management of environmental values or the production of sustainable timber. Why? Simply, because the proposals do not provide adequate protections for the forests’ natural ecosystems, especially wildlife habitat and corridors, rainforest and high conservation value old growth forests. The proposed timber harvests are simply not “sustainable” by any definition. In brief, some of the principle concerns I have are around the proposed harvesting sites within any coupe, which are too large at between 45 and 250 hectares, and the proposed minimum areas for harvesting are too small, especially over annual harvest timeframes. The prescription for management and monitoring is almost non-existent and does not provide any assurance that contractors will be subject to oversight and made to adhere to the regulations.

Q18. What parts of the draft Coastal IFOA do you think have a negative outcome on the management of environmental values or the production of sustainable timber? Why?

I believe every aspect of the draft Coastal IFOA will have a negative outcome on the management of environmental values and the production of sustainable timber. Why? Because the permanent protection areas are too small, the harvesting areas are too large and the rate of harvesting is too rapid and intense. In addition, the proposed approvals to do not provide adequate or proper monitoring and management of logging operations.

Q19. What are your views on the effectiveness of the combination of permanent environmental protections at the regional, landscape and operational scales (multi-scale protection)?

As described in my responses above, the proposed “multi-scale protections” will be completely ineffective because the scale is egregiously skewed in favour of timber harvest and is highly detrimental to any realistic conservation of the natural ecosystems of the forests. For example, in a forest of 1500 hectares, “permanent protection” of a mere 5% - or 75 hectares - is simply not a enough. The nearby logging operations will inevitably effect the initially quarantined area, which will rapidly degrade.

Q20. In your opinion, would the draft Coastal IFOA be effective in managing environmental values and a sustainable timber industry? Why?

If the Coastal IFOA is put into effect, there will be a timber industry in north-east NSW, but it won’t be sustainable and the environmental values of our still superb native forests will be completely trashed. These beautiful, precious areas of native forests will be on the way to being lost forever.

Q21. General comments

The model of forest management put forward in the IFOAs belongs to a bygone era. If the IFOAs as proposed are implemented, we may as well say good-bye to our north-east NSW forests because they will be unrecognisable in a generation, if not less. Timber production in NSW, indeed Australia wide, needs to be moved to sustainably managed plantation forests.

Q22. Attach your supporting documents (Document 1) not answered

Q23. Attach your supporting documents (Document 2) not answered

Q24. Attach your supporting documents (Document 3) not answered