

LETTER SENT TO THE AUSTRALIAN: Prue Acton 12.10.2010

Your editorial states “the Tasmanian timber industry and green groups are on the verge of ending a generation of conflict over the logging of native forests.” “Both sides say there are details to debate, in particular whether residue from native forests can count as fuel for renewable power” generation.” And that “environmentalists understand public opinion will never accept a ban on logging altogether” so “why waste time with non-negotiable claims?”

Firstly, round 80% of Australians want native forest logging stopped.

This argument is not just over old growth forests. Burning native forests for electricity is not negotiable.

Only 5% of trees logged are used for sawn timber; the rest are classified as waste and can be woodchipped.

The timber and fibre industry has moved away from native forests to plantations. Forestry interests are desperate to find a secondary market for their chips and see recent legislation making native forest so called “waste” eligible for Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) as a Godsend.

Nippon Paper has applied for the first wood-fired power station at their Eden chip mill, NSW, using 70-90% native forest “waste”; conservationists are also protesting against the company’s similar plans in the USA.

Australia’s native forests are not “renewable”; it takes around 180 years to replace carbon, water and wildlife habitat.

Australia’s unique forests are non-negotiable.