

MEDIA RELEASE:

BIG FIGHT AHEAD FOR LOCAL CONSERVATIONISTS WITH PASSAGE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY BILL

The vote in the Senate today (Thursday) to include native forest wood in the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target (MRET) signals that conservationists have a big fight ahead of them to stop the industrial scale burning of native forest wood for energy, according to Chipstop spokesperson, Ms Harriett Swift.

"We expect to be part of a national campaign of groups determined to stop wood fired power projects around Australia now that this Bill has passed."

Ms Swift said that the passage of the MRET Bill removes one of the biggest hurdles that the proposed wood fired power station at the Eden chipmill has to jump.

"While the Commonwealth regulatory regime is now settled, the chipmill power station must still complete a NSW Government planning process, but there is little reason for confidence that this will be rigorous or even honest," she says.

Ms Swift says that the government and chipmill managers still have no answer to challenges to explain how this electricity can be considered renewable when its "waste wood" fuel is only available because they woodchip one million tonnes of native forest each year.

"They have failed to respond to our argument that when you take account of the whole life cycle of the fuel, industrial burning of native forest wood generates about six times the greenhouse gas emissions as coal fired electricity," she says.

Ms Swift says that conservationists from the south east region had put up a great fight to stop the Bill passing and know they have a big fight ahead of them.

"But we are up for that," she says.

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