



AUSTRALIAN FORESTS AND CLIMATE ALLIANCE
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20 April 2016

MEDIA RELEASE: LOGGERS TURN UP THE HEAT ON FORESTS

The new push by the Australian Forests Products Association (AFPA) to include industrial heat as well as electricity in the Renewable Energy Target (RET) is yet another cynical attempt to prop up the failing and uneconomic native forest logging industry, according to the Australian Forests and Climate Alliance (AFCA).

“When the native forest-based wood-chipping industry collapsed, the logging industry persuaded the government to allow the burning of native forest logs for electricity production,” said AFCA spokesperson, Lorraine Bower.

“This demand was granted through the inclusion of native forest wood in the RET in 2015 as eligible for Renewable Energy Certificates. Now the logging industry wants to take this even further and include heat as well as electricity in the RET.

“AFPA claims that burning woody biomass from forests is ‘renewable’. Far from it. It takes hundreds of years to renew a forest, far longer than the time we have to address dangerous climate change” said Ms Bower.

“Credible scientists agree that burning wood emits more carbon than burning coal. There is a massive backlash in Europe and the USA against calling the burning of wood for energy ‘renewable’.

“Burning wood industrially for heat also produces particulate matter that contains a toxic mix of chemicals, some of which are known to be carcinogenic.

“AFPA cites the use of wood as a source of energy and heat in Europe to justify its use here, but the plantation crops in Europe do not support a whole range of wildlife as our native forests do.

“The logging industry has used the completely misleading term of ‘waste’ to greenwash the fact that the wood used for so-called renewable energy is actually whole logs, part of complex ecosystems and formerly habitat for a variety of native animals.” said Ms Bower.

“Our forests have been logged unsustainably for decades and this has contributed significantly to the decline of species. Government incentives should not be given to hasten the destruction of native forests and wildlife, damage soils, deplete water supplies and increase our greenhouse gas emissions.

The Australian Forests and Climate Alliance calls upon the federal government to reject this new environmentally destructive proposal completely, and to take native forest biomass out of the eligible sources for electricity production in the RET.

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