



# NSW FORESTS ARE NOT FUEL

**STOP NSW'S NATIVE FORESTS BEING BURNT FOR ELECTRICITY**

## SUBMISSION WRITING GUIDE

The O'Farrell government is planning to allow native forests to be logged and burnt for electricity.

If it goes ahead, this change will have appalling consequences for the survival of native animals, the health of the local environment and the state's carbon emissions.

By giving the failing wood chipping industry the ability to sell native woodchips to the electricity market, this amendment would increase logging and devastate NSW's remaining native forest habitats.

The proposal would target not only trees that are currently used for wood chipping but also species that are too hard or too red to be used in the paper and pulp production. This includes prime koala habitat trees such as forest red gum, iron bark, bloodwood, grey box and wollybutt.

**Tell the O'Farrell government to drop their plans to burn native forests for electricity  
Make a submission today**

### Summary of proposed changes:

The Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2009 currently prohibits the use of 'native forest bio-materials' to generate electricity.

The O'Farrell government is proposing to amend this regulation to enable the following vegetation on public or private land to be burnt for electricity generation:

- Areas approved for logging for pulp products
- Vegetation that has been approved for clearing
- Offcuts and 'waste' from the timber industry.

### Send your submissions to:

#### Post:

Native Forest Biomaterials Consultation  
Reform and Compliance Branch  
Environment Protection Authority  
PO Box A290  
Sydney South NSW 1232

**Email:** [native.biomass@epa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:native.biomass@epa.nsw.gov.au)

**Website:** <http://tiny.cc/epawoodpower>

**Submissions due:** Tuesday 20 August 2013

### Key points to make in your submission:

#### 1. CREATING A NEW MARKET FOR NATIVE FOREST WOOD PRODUCTS WILL LEAD TO MORE LOGGING

- For NSW's struggling native forest wood chip industry, this proposal to open up native vegetation for power station fuel is a desperate attempt to keep the industry viable and continue its destruction of native forests.
- Despite receiving massive government subsidies, the Eden woodchip mill is currently running at a \$2.6 million a year loss, while in June this year Boral Timber sold its plant and equipment at the Port of Newcastle and Tea Gardens and closed its woodchip export business. With cheaper sources of woodchips undermining exports to countries like Japan and China, the multinational owners of the mills are looking for new ways to continue to make money out of the destruction the state's forests.
- Currently the woodchip industry is not interested in species such as red gum and woollybutt that are too hard or too red to be considered for paper production. The proposed changes would open up these species, which are prime koala habitat, for cutting and burning in power station furnaces.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: [johnkaye.org.au/nsw-forests-are-not-fuel](http://johnkaye.org.au/nsw-forests-are-not-fuel)**



- The proposal would not only create the opportunity for the industry to return to its peak levels of 1 million tonnes of woodchips a year from the South and 200,000 tonnes from the North but would expand the species and trees that the logging industry would target.

## 2. INCREASING LOGGING WILL DESTROY NATIVE FORESTS AND DEVASTATE ANIMAL POPULATIONS

- Native forest wood-chipping turns high conservation value land into low economic value commodity exports, with devastating consequences for the ecosystems and the native animals that depended upon them.
- NSW native forests are already being pushed to the brink. It is estimated that since 1788 some 60% of native forest cover has been lost. Of the remaining native forests, only 19% is formally protected from logging.
- Millions of native animals are killed and displaced each year as a result of existing native forest logging.
- The South East and the North Coast are ecologically diverse and provide habitats for numerous native animal species including koalas. Possums, sugar gliders and powerful owls are among the 400 species that rely on the old growth tree hollows in the South East forests which take up to 180 years to form.
- Existing over-harvesting of state forests is greatly compromising their health and ecological diversity. If this proposal becomes law, this damage will be accelerated.



## 3. BURNING NATIVE FORESTRY BIOMASS FOR ELECTRICITY DOES NOT CREATE GREEN ENERGY

- Native forestry biomass is not renewable. As the forests are logged, habitat is destroyed and does not fully recover for hundreds of years, if ever. The NSW Environmental Protection Authority's claims that the proposal is consistent with the government's plans to increase renewable energy generation to 20% by 2020 are misleading and deceptive.
- Greenhouse gas emissions from burning native forest for electricity generation can be as much as 6.4 times greater than the equivalent-sized coal-fired power station.
- Greenhouse gas emissions are not only released when the biomass is burnt in the power station but also when the forests are logged and sequestered carbon is released into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gas emissions from logging of native forests to supply the Eden chip mill have been conservatively estimated at over 18 million tonnes per year.
- Burning native forests for electricity generation will not only increase NSW's greenhouse gas emissions but will damage the market for genuinely renewable energy technologies such as solar and wind.
- Burning native forests for electricity generation produces air pollution containing toxic metals and other chemicals that are detrimental to human health. These include arsenic compounds, micro-fine particles (PM3.5 and PM10) and 2,3,7,8 tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-furan, hydrogen sulphide, nitrogen oxides (NOx), lead arsenate and other lead compounds, arsenic and inorganic arsenic compounds, mercury, hydrochloric acid, sulphuric acid and sulphur dioxide (SO2).



## 4. BURNING NATIVE FORESTRY BIOMASS FOR ELECTRICITY GENERATION IS NOT NEEDED TO CREATE A 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY SUPPLY

- Genuinely green energy sources like wind, solar and even biomass from sustainable sources such as organic agriculture, together with energy efficiency and demand management, can supply all of NSW's energy needs.
- NSW's forests are worth more to this state standing than being woodchipped for electricity generation.

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