

Loophole In New Climate Agreement To Increase Emissions By 1 Billion Tonnes

Australia Part of Dishonest Campaign To Avoid Accounting for Forest Destruction

Australia and other countries at climate change talks in Cancun, Mexico this week are planning to exploit a loophole in proposed new international emissions rules to increase greenhouse pollution from the destruction of native forests and wetlands by 1 billion tonnes.

Representatives of The Wilderness Society and International Youth greeted the Minister for Climate Change Greg Combet as he arrived in Cancun to urge him to sign a Truth in Targets campaign to close the loophole and also be honest about the greenhouse pollution from destruction of forests and wetlands in our own backyard.

The new Kyoto rules for land and forests in developed countries would allow a 500 Megatonne increase in greenhouse emissions from logging and fail to close an existing 500 Megatonne loophole on destruction of wetlands.

Virginia Young from The Wilderness Society said the loophole represents 10 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

“The Australian government will further undermine a global agreement cut greenhouse pollution levels if it attempts to exploit this loophole and support an increase in forest and wetland destruction in its own backyard and in other countries,” Ms Young said.

“The Australian government could cut its greenhouse pollution levels cheaply and easily by protecting its native forests from further logging.

“However, it will only add to the climate problem and increase greenhouse pollution levels if it is dishonest and exploits this loophole to allow the destruction of forests and wetlands to continue.”

Under the proposed new Kyoto rules, all developed countries would be allowed to increase their emissions from the forest sector and would not have to account for the increase in emissions reduction targets.

Australia’s planned increase in logging emissions would mean its commitment to reduce emissions by a minimum of five per cent and a maximum of 15 per cent would be reduced to one per cent and at best 11 per cent.

All delegates to the Cancun climate talks are being asked to sign up to the Truth in Targets campaign. The campaign has been joined by a team of 70 members of the International Youth Delegation to Cancun.

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