

MEDIA RELEASE - NORTH EAST FOREST ALLIANCE 09.10.2018

We must stop logging of public native forests to avoid the worst impacts of global warming

In response to the alarming report from the IPCC on the impacts of global warming and the necessity of urgent action, NEFA is renewing its call for a rapid phase out of logging of public native forests to allow them to take up ever increasing volumes of atmospheric carbon as they recover from past logging, and to warn against the push to substitute native forests for coal in electricity generation as this will increase carbon pollution.

The IPCC report identifies that human emissions have already increased global temperatures by 1 degree, at that at current rates temperature rises are set to reach 1.5 degrees by as early as 2030. In order to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees the IPCC identifies that we need to cut net carbon emissions by 45% by 2030 and reduce net carbon emissions to zero by 2050.

Forests are the lungs of the earth, they take in our carbon dioxide, storing the carbon and giving us back oxygen, left standing they are part of the solution to climate change, cut down they become part of the problem, according to NEFA spokesperson Dailan Pugh.

"The reality is that logging has run down the carbon storage in vast tracts of NSW's forest by [40-60%](#). As logging intensity increases the carbon stored in the trees and soil, along with the forest's structure and biodiversity, is further diminished.

"It has [been estimated](#) that globally wooded areas soak up a third of the fossil fuels released into the atmosphere each year, if we were to stop deforestation tomorrow the world's established and regrowing forests would remove half of fossil fuel emissions.

"For south-east Australia [is has been estimated](#) that allowing logged forests to realize their sequestration potential would be equal to 24 per cent of the 2005 Australian net greenhouse gas emissions.

"Stopping logging of public native forests will allow the recovering forests to take up and store huge volumes of atmospheric carbon as they age. This will help buy us time while we reduce emissions from other sectors.

"Burning forests to generate electricity doesn't make sense, we lose the tree's ability to take in and store carbon, and when they are burnt they [release more carbon dioxide](#) into the atmosphere than burning coal.

"We are facing a climate emergency. Continuing to cut down our terrestrial carbon store-houses and burning forests for electricity is sheer madness.

"If we want to address the climate chaos caused by rising atmospheric carbon we need to quickly move to obtaining our energy from non-polluting sources, such as wind and solar, while restoring the ability of our forests to take-up and store increasing volumes of carbon as they age.

"We need to stop logging of public native forests not increase it" Mr. Pugh said.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR COMMENT: Dailan Pugh 66 807063

A 2017 review by [Chatham House](#) concluded that since *"woody biomass is less energy dense than fossil fuels, and contains higher quantities of moisture and less hydrogen, at the point of combustion burning wood for energy usually emits more greenhouse gases per unit of energy produced than fossil fuels. Overall, while some instances of biomass energy use may result in lower lifecycle emissions than fossil fuels, in most circumstances, comparing technologies of similar ages, the use of woody biomass for energy will release higher levels of emissions than coal and considerably higher levels than gas"*.