

## **MEDIA RELEASE: NEW EDEN WOOD SUPPLY AGREEMENTS “FUDGING” THE TRUTH**

Conservationists have accused the Government and the woodchipping industry of fudging the truth with the release of new Wood Supply Agreements (WSAs)[1] for the Eden chipmill this week.

“The WSA for Eden has the misleading title: ‘Regrowth Forest and Plantation Hardwood Pulp Logs’. This clearly aims to give the impression that native forest logging is a thing of the past,” according to conservationist, Harriett Swift, who is convener of the Chipstop Campaign.

The new WSAs guarantee at least another 15 years supply of trees to the Eden chipmill. They were finally released this week after expiring on New Years Eve. They are back dated to 6 months ago.

Ms Swift challenged the Forestry Corporation to come clean about where the hardwood “plantations” referred to in the WSA are located and how much plantation wood is available.

She said that in spite of the title, much of the wood going to the chipmill will continue to come from forests which are neither “plantation” nor young “regrowth.”

“Nowhere in the 49 pages of the document is there a definition of “plantation” or “regrowth forest”.

“The document contains over 3 pages of definitions but these crucial terms are missing.”

Ms Swift said that the WSAs are designed to disguise the realities of the woodchipping industry.

“For example, the log specification appears to exclude logs over 80 cm in diameter, but if you read the fine print you will see that it is OK to split bigger logs before they are delivered to the chipmill.”

She said that the move to a new “delivered” pricing system will also help to conceal the real value that the government is putting on our forests.

“A move to a ‘delivered price’ in the Eden Region will mean that ‘stumpage’ and haulage costs are combined, so it will be harder to identify the book cost of logs.

“The new WSA signals that the industry also looks set to become a whole lot less transparent than before.

“There are clauses in the WSA (S. 34.2) requiring that certain crucial information is concealed from the public. The Government Information (Public Access) Act and Questions in Parliament are specifically cited, with penalties for anyone disclosing certain information, particularly information relating to the prices of logs and haulage.”

“The public has a right to know when their forests are being given away to woodchippers for a pittance.”

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[1] Follow the links from <https://www.forestrycorporation.com.au/about/sales-and-supply>  
You need to unzip them. They are Winzip files.