

Letter to SMH: Cut carbon debt. 12.08.09

Prue Acton

Industrialized native forest logging, predominantly for woodchips, is causing around 7% of Australia's GHG emissions each year. This is increasing the carbon debt from logging and clearing half of her forests since colonization.

Regional Forest Agreements (RFA's) have ten years to run. These provide Australia with an account of logging which can be used to calculate emissions from lost carbon sinks. If we stopped woodchipping native forests now, we can stop these emissions and reduce our carbon debt as forests are restored to their full carbon carrying capacity.

Under UNFCCC (*sic* Kyoto) rules, Australia can opt to count these avoided emissions as a complimentary measure to the CPRS.

We have a glut of bluegum plantations courtesy of taxpayers. We do not need to continue making losses woodchipping native forests: for paper, for bio-fuels nor for bio-energy; These are all inefficient uses of the best carbon stores on earth.

What have we to lose? The falling number of native forest workers can be re-employed in forest restoration, plantations and low carbon jobs whilst we all gain from deeper cuts to emissions, with interest, in "green" carbon ban. An exit package of \$500ml would do the whole industry.

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