

MEDIA RELEASE: CHIPMILL DIOXIN CLAIMS BACKED BY STATE GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT. HARRIETT SWIFT 20.11.2011

Conservationist claims about deadly chemical dioxin emissions from the proposed wood fired power station at the Eden chipmill have been backed in a State Government document.

The former NSW Department of DECCW (now Office of Environment and Heritage), in a submission just released by the NSW Department of Planning on the Eden wood fired power station says that dioxin emissions from the project are "above the guideline performance criteria for this type of project."

"Submissions on the project were kept secret by the previous Government and while the incoming Liberal Government promised to release them, it took its time," according to the convenor of the Chipstop Campaign against Woodchipping, Harriett Swift.

According to the World Health Organisation, "dioxins are persistent, highly toxic environmental pollutants" which "can cause reproductive and developmental problems, damage the immune system, interfere with hormones and also cause cancer." [1]

"When I mentioned the likelihood of high dioxin emissions last year in my statements on the proposed power station, South East Fibre Exports (SEFE) managers ridiculed me and accused me of scare mongering," Ms Swift said.

"It is now easy to understand why the power station is more than 2 years behind schedule and there has still been no response at all from SEFE to public submissions."

"The ball has been in the chipmill's court for well over a year now and it clearly is having trouble responding in a credible way to the dioxin issue."

Among other criticisms made in official Government submissions, the Department of Industry and Investment - Energy Division rapped SEFE over the knuckles for misusing the term "Green Power" for its wood fired electricity and warned the woodchipping company not to do it again.

20 November 2011 Contact: 0414908997

Extract from DECCW submission

<http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=2914>

Dioxin emissions from the project have been assessed in the EA using an assumed dioxin emission of 0.2 ng/m³.

DECCW considers that a dioxin emission of 0.2 ng/m³ is above the guideline performance criteria for this type of project of 0.1 ng/ m³. Although the level of 0.1 ng/ m³ does not strictly apply as the proposal is burning standard fuels, DECCW expects a similar level of performance from the project as a well designed wood waste boiler could readily comply with a dioxin limit of 0.1 ng/ m³ given the proposed fuels.

In order to address this issue DECCW recommends that the draft Statement of Commitments be revised to guarantee that dioxin emissions from the project will meet the appropriate performance criteria of less than 0.1 ng/ m³.

[1] <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs225/en/>