

## WHITE PAPER BRINGS WOODCHIP POWER A STEP CLOSER

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The Government's White Paper has probably brought electricity generation from burning native forest wood a step closer by classifying all biofuels as carbon neutral, according to forest activist, Harriett Swift, convener of the Chipstop campaign. "This could signal a dire fate for the region's native forests," Ms Swift said.

"The White Paper does not appear to distinguish between native forest and plantation biomass and does not even bother trying to con us into thinking of native forest wood as "waste."  
"There are still a few bureaucratic obstacles for the proposed Eden woodchip power station to jump before it gets a firm go ahead for its wood fired power station," Ms Swift said.

She said that wood fired power generation is not carbon neutral and should take into account the enormous emissions generated by native forest logging, in other words the whole life cycle of the "fuel."

She said that the recent report on taxation by Treasury Secretary, Ken Henry, supports conservationists' concerns. In commenting on resource pricing, Mr Henry questions whether it is valid to consider a fuel renewable if it takes a very long time to replace itself.

"When a forest has been felled and the wood is burned, it takes 80 years before the emissions from the wood burning are neutralized by the regrowth forest."

"It is more than twice as long when all logging emissions such as loss of soil carbon are taken into account," Ms Swift said.

"Burning wood for electricity is expensive, even when the wood is free. It will only be viable for South East Fibre Exports if wood fired power is included in the Rudd Government's expanded Mandatory Renewable Energy Target (MRET) scheme, with the consequent financial benefits that brings".

“We will know early next year whether native forest wood will be classified as renewable under MRET. If it is, it will be competing with genuine renewables such as solar and wind.”

“In our region, this means that Eden woodchip power will be directly competing with the Clean Energy for Eternity Solar Farm.”

“This will be a very unfair contest as woodchip power under MRET will be a lot cheaper than the solar power,” Ms Swift said.

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