

ChipBusters
SERCA South East Region Conservation Alliance
Environment East Gippsland
CHIPSTOP
Western Australian Forest Alliance

Media Release

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Election Outcome Good for Forests in Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales and a Blow to Woodchip-fired Power Stations

Conservation groups today claimed that the Federal election result was a further blow to proposed woodchip-fired power stations, including the controversial Eden plant in NSW, and to native forest logging.

“The Greens will hold the balance of power in the Senate and are determined to protect forests as a crucial part of the battle against climate change,” said Noel Plumb of anti-woodchip group ChipBusters

“The Coalition did not gain any of the woodchip industry seats held by Labor by its last minute announcement before the election that it would remove barriers preventing the burning of native forest wood generally being classified as renewable energy.”

"In Tasmania, the Coalition has lost a Senate seat to Labor but Labor has lost the seat of Dennison to a progressive Independent, Andrew Wilkie. Mr Wilkie has long opposed the Gunns pulp mill and says ‘...the widespread logging of native forests should be phased out...’ "

“In Victoria, Labor has lost its iconic, progressive seat of Melbourne to the Greens’ Adam Bandt and forests and climate change are high on the Greens’ priority list. The Coalition lost the logging seats of McEwen and La Trobe in Victoria (both areas feed native forests to the Maryvale pulp mill) to Labor. While the ALP has no interest in saving the forests and has also promised more money, \$20 million, to the woodchip industry, its present policy position is still less extreme than the Coalition’s.”

“In NSW, the Coalition with its rabidly pro-logging candidate David Gazard had a swing against it in the bell wether seat of Eden Monaro despite them promising open slather on burning forests for electricity and \$42 million to the woodchip industry,” said Harriet Swift of the forest campaign group CHIPSTOP.

“ In Western Australia, Wilson ‘Ironbar’ Tuckey’s loss of O’Connor is a significant plus for the forests given his outrageous and destructive views on forest conservation,” said Rob Versluis of WAFA.

“The anti-woodchip campaign by conservation groups in Eden Monaro certainly boosted the strong vote for the Green’s Cath Moore and ultimately gave a swing

to the ALP's successful Mike Kelly who at least did not try to make election capital at the expense of the forests," said Prue Acton of SERCA.

"Now we need to see if Mr Kelly and the ALP will join the overwhelming majority of Australians to support a transition of the logging industry out of our forests and also clearly oppose the Eden woodchip-fired power station."

"The hardline, pro-forestry forces led by Tasmanian Coalition Senators Eric Abetz and Richard Colbeck have been severely embarrassed. These Senators moved in the Senate in the last few days of Parliament to remove the barriers to burning native forests for electricity by giving the woodchippers green energy bonuses under the Renewable Energy legislation," said Noel Plumb.

"All around the country the Greens increased their vote, and a large part of this was the public's dismay that neither Labor or Liberal will take real action to protect our forests and fight climate change."

"In fact, recent polls show that 70% of Australians in rural and regional areas want an end to native forest logging. Nationally, the figure is nearly 80%."

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