**Media Release 1**

XXXX has endorsed a national Position Statement against burning forests for energy along with 80 other national and state wide organisations, 5 political parties and some independent election candidates.

“We’ve signed this statement to try to stop Australian native forests from being exported as wood pellets for electricity or from entering furnaces here, said XXXXX on behalf of XXX.

“The forest bioenergy trade involves cutting down native forests as well as plantations and burning them in the pretence that it creates a carbon neutral renewable energy because trees regrow. In reality burning wood emits more carbon to atmosphere than coal. It’s one of the worse things that could be done.

“We signed this statement to try to put some hold on run away climate change and our appalling extinction rate. This country should be fully protecting its world class native forests, which can store and draw down vast quantities of carbon from the atmosphere if they are left standing. They are also the home for our imperilled wildlife. We are in an extinction crisis our two major parties are ignoring.

“It’s almost unthinkable that the Coalition and Labor will both allow this use of forests. If they don’t wake up or Australians not elect them, our forests are going to be exported as wood pellets, wood chip and whole logs, for furnaces.

In 2015 the Abbott government removed the ban against burning native forests for electricity so that it could be subsidised as a ‘renewable’ energy.

“That has resulted in our native forests being burnt here to prop up profits from coal and being exported for power stations. With Asian countries moving to replace coal with wood, we’re about to see a doubling of the wood pellet trade with shocking impacts on our native forests carbon stores and sinks.

“This is an emergency for Australian forests so we’re calling on both sides of politics to wake up and re-instate the 2013 ban against burning native forests for electricity or exporting them to be processed for fuel. Our survival and that of our wildlife depends on native forests left standing.”

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**Media Release 2**

80 national and state wide organisations, 5 political parties and some independents have issued a statement to warn Australian voters and policy makers of a shocking state of affairs this federal election.

“XXXXXXX has also endorsed the **National Position Statement against Forest Bioenergy** because of the climate and biodiversity disaster that will ensue if either major party proceeds with their policies to allow native forests to be burnt here and/or exported as renewable energy.

We are in a climate change emergency, yet the Australian public don’t know that the Coalition has actively promoted that this nation’s native forests carbon sink, the means by which atmospheric carbon is drawn down from the atmosphere for safe storage, can be logged and burnt to generate power. Now Labor has backed down from a ban it wisely introduced in 2013 to allow native forests to be burnt for electricity.

So the outcome for our native forests if either of these political parties gain government without changing these policies is extremely grim”, said XXXXXXX spokesperson for XXXXXX.

“This forest bioenergy industry relies on wood pellets from forests. Large scale wood biomass for electricity and heating took hold in Europe in the last decade when corporations convinced policy makers to call burning wood carbon neutral. Those companies were subsidized to burn forest wood instead of coal, as a ‘renewable’.

“Since this source of power has doubled, from 30 Gigawatt in 2007 to over 60 GW in 2017, so have emissions from forest degradation.

“The forest bioenergy trade threatens not only Australia’s carbon stores and its carbon sink, i.e. its native forests, but the entire planet because Asia is about to abandon coal for wood biomass and Australian native forests will be included in that wood supply.

The Australian Religious Response to Climate Change, all national conservation groups - ACF, Birdlife Australia branches, the Climate Council, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, The Wilderness Society, the Australian Marine Conservation Society, state conservation councils and multiple other national and regional groups are determined the Australian public be made aware of what is at stake this election.

“Fortunately there are political parties which will not condone this use of forests. They represent our only hope for preservation of the nation’s carbon sink”.

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**Media Release 3**

In the last decade thousands of scientists have written open letters to Australian, European Union and US policy makers stating that per unit of energy wood emits more carbon to atmosphere than coal.[[1]](#endnote-1)

That has not been enough to halt the trade in wood pellets that has seen vast swathes of the world’s forests logged to supply the forest bioenergy trade which replaces coal with wood in power stations.

“This industry claims that burning wood instead of coal is carbon neutral because trees regrow, despite the warnings from climate and forest scientists about its immediate impacts,” said XXXXX on behalf of XXXXXX.

“That is why XXXXX has joined 80 national and state wide organisations, 5 political parties and many independent election candidates in signing a National Position Statement against Forest Bioenergy. Our surviving native forests are in peril from this trade but neither major party is heeding scientific warning.

The forest bioenergy trade threatens not only Australia’s carbon stores and its carbon sink, i.e. its native forests, but the entire planet.

“This industry relies on wood pellets from forests. As large scale wood biomass for electricity and heating took hold in Europe in the last decade when corporations convinced policy makers to call burning wood carbon neutral, these companies were subsidized to burn forest wood instead of coal, as a ‘renewable’.

Since forest bioenergy doubled, from 30 Gigawatt in 2007 to over 60 GW in 2017, so have emissions from forest degradation.

As trade in wood pellets is predicted to increase by more than 250% over the next decade Australia’s native forests are in peril as never before. 3 million tonnes of wood pellets are predicted to exported from Australia in the next 10 years and it will not be coming from mill residue. Forest agencies pushing using native forests to supply this industry admit whole trees are preferred because they’re easier to transport to processing centres for export.

“We call on both major parties to change forest policy now before it is too late for all of us,” XXXXX said.

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**Media Release 4**

XXXX has endorsed a national Position Statement against burning forests for energy along with 80 other national and state wide organisations, 5 political parties and some independent election candidates.

“We’ve signed this statement to try to stop Australian native forests from being exported as wood pellets for electricity or from entering furnaces here, said XXXXX on behalf of XXX.

“The Coalition is promoting export of Australian forests to fuel overseas furnaces. In December 2018, Tony Pasin MP travelled to Japan with the Australian Forest Products Association and the other main logging group, Responsible Wood, to promote Australian forest wood exports so that Japan can replace coal with wood*. The MP announced that “Japan’s appetite for our Aussie woodchips and manufactured bio-pellets has driven the country’s move into bio-energy”.*

“As trade in wood pellets is predicted to increase by more than 250% over the next decade, Australia’s native forests are in peril as never before, said XXXX. “

“The logging industry claims this is a residue based industry yet 3 million tonnes of wood pellets are predicted to exported from Australia in the next 10 years. That’s not mill residue. Forest agencies pushing using native forests to supply this industry admit whole trees are preferred because they’re easier to transport to processing centres for export.

“We have ten years only in which to cut emissions and preserve the natural carbon sinks, yet the major parties see only an ‘economic’ opportunity by logging and exporting wood biomass or pellets for a global wood pellet trade. Companies will be subsidised by both our and overseas governments for putting native and other forests into furnaces. Meanwhile neither Japan nor China are expanding logging of their own forests for a pseudo renewable.

“Thousands of scientists have written open letters to Australian, European Union and US policy makers stating that per unit of energy wood emits more carbon to atmosphere than coal. There is proof of the shocking destruction of vast swathes of the world’s forests, the carbon sink so desperately needed to draw down from the atmosphere CO2 in concentrations already dangerous for survival.

“Powerful interests spin the myth that re-growing forests will re-capture the carbon. The only problem is that won’t be in our lifetimes.

“That forest bioenergy is a carbon neutral climate change fix is a myth a primary school child can see through. We’re only hoping the Australian public will understand the scope and impact of this scandal before the election.”

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)