



CLARENCE ENVIRONMENT CENTRE Inc

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The General Manager
Environmental Protection Agency
DPIE

Submission

To the draft

Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2022

Introduction

The Clarence Environment Centre (CEC) has maintained a shop-front presence in Grafton for over 30 years and has a proud history of environmental advocacy. For that entire period our members have fought to protect our state forests from the environmental vandalism that has been slowly worsening ever since the signing of the historic Forests Agreements in 2000.

We have decided to make this submission brief, as we consider the proposed legislation, that allows native trees to be burned to produce electricity, is so ludicrous, that it has to be dumped.

Discussion.

It is universally agreed that the world is facing a climate emergency, and left unaddressed the world will suffer an extinction event, the likes of which has not been witnessed on Earth for millions of years.

The proposed legislation allows, *“native pulp wood logs and heads and off-cuts resulting from clearing carried out in accordance with a private native forestry plan or forestry operations carried out in accordance with an integrated forestry operations approval under the Forestry Act 2012, Part 5B. and trees cleared as a result of thinning carried out in accordance with a private native forestry plan or in accordance with an integrated forestry operations approval under the Forestry Act 2012, Part 5B”*

Note: “Native pulp wood logs”, include any trees that are unsuitable for timber production

It is also universally agreed that climate change is the result of human activities that have increased atmospheric greenhouse gas levels, mainly CO₂ and methane, causing the world to heat up.

The mass extinctions of flora and fauna are directly linked to the impacts of climate change, temperature rise, extreme weather events, ocean acidification, droughts and wildfires, but are also exacerbated by loss of habitat through the clearing and destruction of forest ecosystems.

At this critical juncture, there is an urgent need to immediately reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase the amount of forest to help store carbon. So, who in their right mind would propose to allow native forests to be cut down and be burned to produce further greenhouse gas emissions in the process? This is completely contrary to what is needed to minimise the impacts, and avoid catastrophic global heating.

If you decision-makers can spare a single thought for future generations, i.e. your children and grandchildren, and their future welfare, the relevant clauses that allow the burning of native timber to produce electricity, must be deleted from this proposed legislation.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment

Yours sincerely

John Edwards
Honorary Secretary.