

23 June 2015

## Cross-bench Senators back common sense result on wood waste

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) welcomes the reinstatement of native forest wood waste in the Renewable Energy Target (RET), which was voted through the Senate today.

This common sense policy, which was a Coalition election commitment, was supported by cross-bench Senators Day, Lambie, Leyonhjelm, Madigan, Muir, Wang and Xenophon. This cross-bench support was vital in voting down an amendment put forward by the Australian Labor Party and supported by the Greens and Senator Lazarus to stop the reinstatement of native forest wood waste in the RET.

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Mr Ross Hampton said, "Until we grow square trees we will always have a large amount of residues and offcuts from our sustainable harvesting and processing operations. Bark and branches are left on the forest floor, providing mountains of kindling for mega bushfires, or pushed into piles to rot away. At sawmills the offcuts and sawdust pile up and add costs to small regional businesses. Now with renewable energy certificates once more available for what is so clearly a renewable resource, these residues will be able to be put to a better use. We look forward to seeing proposals for small scale power-plants, which will enable regional communities with a sawmill, for example, in its midst to convert from coal or gas fired power to bioenergy - reducing greenhouse gas emissions".

Mr Hampton said, "The use of native forest wood for the primary purpose of generating renewable electricity is not eligible for renewable energy certificates under this legislation. The use of offcuts and by-products of sustainable forestry operations to generate renewable electricity makes sense. After all, what could be more sustainable and environmentally friendly than using a waste product to generate electricity, noting that our forest industries plant more than sixty million trees every year?".

"The very same legislation was in place for a decade until 2011 (including for three years under Labor) without any harmful effects. Our national forest industries will remain amongst the most tightly regulated and carefully managed in the world and continue their work in growing a sustainable industry for generations," said Mr Hampton.

AFPA represents forest growers, harvesters, and manufacturers of timber and paper products.

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