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Common sense to reinstate wood waste in RET deal

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) has welcomed the Australian Government's decision to ensure native forest wood waste is reinstated as a feedstock for renewable bioenergy as part of any future deal on the Renewable Energy Target (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 forestry operations. The biomass material in question is a waste product and will not affect the level of native forest harvesting in Australia."

"It is extremely disappointing to the 120,000 Australians who work in our industries that, despite years of conversations and explanations, the Australian Labor Party has again chosen to side with an inner city Green policy position rather than align itself with working families in the bush. Three inquiries in a row have recommended Australia catch up to the rest of the world and reinstate native forest wood waste in the RET: a majority Labor chaired Parliamentary Inquiry in 2011; the Climate Change Authority in 2012; and the Warburton expert panel review in 2014."

"In the rest of the world bioenergy is a vital part of the renewable energy mix. In Denmark – considered by many environmental groups to be the leading nation in terms of climate change policy action – bioenergy accounts for over 14% of electricity use. In Finland bioenergy is 16% of the energy mix. In Sweden it is 7%, as it is in Germany. Here in Australia our bioenergy use for electricity is only 1%."

About biomass wood waste:

Sustainably managed harvesting and processing operations in Australia generate mountains of offcuts and organic waste every year. These offcuts include sawdust, shavings and bark. Additional biomass is left on the forest floor, providing mountains of kindling for mega bushfires or pushed into piles to rot away or be burnt to clear the site for regeneration. With the incentive of renewable energy certificates many regional enterprises would be able to convert coal or gas fired power and heating facilities to use the wood waste, reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The commercial forest operators who are members of the Australian Forest Products Association are 100% environmentally certified by either FSC or PEFC (AFS) and plant or sow more than 60 million trees each year.

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

For any further information, please contact:

Elizabeth Goodfellow

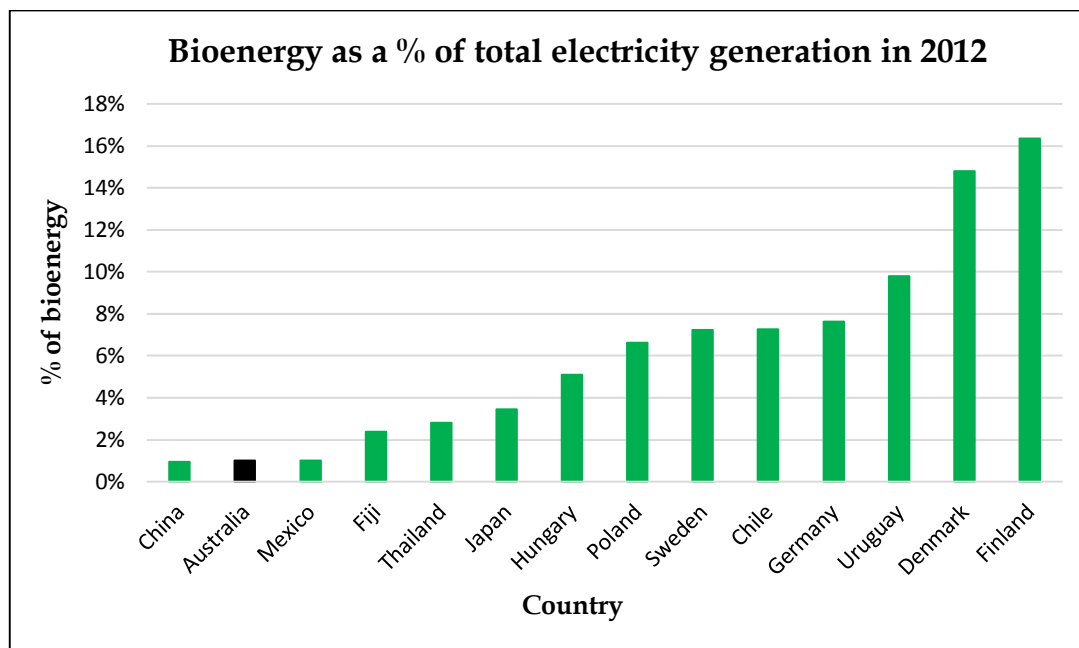
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Source: United States Energy Information Administration (EIA) (see: <http://www.eia.gov/>).

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