

Inquiry into the Closure of the Hazelwood and Yallourn Power Stations

Mr Ian Reid

Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

As a resident of the Latrobe Valley for over 35 years and being involved in the timber industry for 30 years I have seen many of the natural advantages of the area compromised and are concerned that if this trend continues the cost to both the valley and Victorian economy will be high.

I work in the timber industry as a harvesting contractor working predominately in the Gippsland pine and hardwood plantations owned by HVP. By growing the timber resource base an opportunity will be created to use this renewable resource as a raw material for the further development and opportunities for employment within the Latrobe Valley replacing and growing jobs and economic activity lost through the closure of the Hazelwood and Yallourn power stations.

It's a shame the short-sighted decision to stop native logging by 2030 will mean the loss of a significant renewable resource that could have been available for future opportunities with the continued innovation and technology advances for the use of timber (eg Cross laminated timber, reusable paper bags as a replacement of plastic bags, etc). The plan to stop timber from native forests is flawed due to

1) there is not enough time to replace this resource with the planned promise plantation development. Even with trees planted today there will be a gap of 10-20 years before they could begin to replace the native resource

2) The native areas being locked up are regrowth timber anyway, with the lack of management of this resource it will end up being a severe fire risk and is likely to be destroyed by bush fire within 20 years of lock up.

3) Gippsland is well suited due to soil, weather, and rainfall to grow quality trees

Accordingly, I believe that the use of native timber should be for at least another 30 years so that there is an orderly transition from Native timber to plantation timber usage. With the challenge of finding suitable areas for plantations why couldn't some of these native areas that are harvested over the next 30-40 years be converted to plantation areas. There would still be significant areas of native land returned to natural forest, however with plantation estate within these forests roading infrastructure, fire mitigation and public access would be maintained.

Australian forestry is world class and is a sustainable renewable industry that should be expanded so that Australia can be self-sufficient in timber resource rather than importing timber from sources that may not have been grown to the same standards (environmental, safety and sustainability). With the ever-changing world of trade, a reliable domestic market for processed timber product ensures security of resource, enhances bio security requirements, and provides a natural carbon store for Australia

Gippsland has a natural advantage of growing good timber, this timber would create a resource for future manufacturing opportunities, employment opportunities and allow the area to continue to be a leader in technology development. A win-win for Gippsland, Victoria, and Australia.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Ian Reid