

JARRAH AND KARRI FOREST ECOSYSTEMS — LOGGING FOR BIO-FUEL

664. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister representing the Minister for Environment

- (1) Is the Forest Products Commission (FPC) tendering whole logs from the jarrah and karri forest ecosystem outside the scope of the Forest Management Plan (2004-2013) to supply biomass plants with bio-fuel so that the energy sector including coal-fired power stations can claim carbon credits under the Federal Government's Emissions Trading Scheme?
- (2) Is the jarrah forest ecosystem now specifically being logged to supply biomass plants with whole logs as bio-fuel so that the energy sector including coal-fired power stations can claim carbon credits under the Federal Government's Emissions Trading Scheme?
- (3) Is the FPC tendering whole jarrah and karri logs from the native forest ecosystem to supply the energy sector specifically with logs as a bio-fuel so that biomass plants including coal-fired power stations can claim carbon credits under the Federal Government's Emissions Trading Scheme; and
  - (a) if so, what date was the Minister and the Minister's agencies aware that the jarrah forest ecosystem was being specifically logged to supply biomass plants with whole logs as bio-fuel so they can claim carbon credits under the Federal Government's Emissions Trading Scheme?
- (4) What are the names of the energy companies that have been offered tenders by the FPC to source whole logs from the jarrah and karri forest ecosystem?
- (5) What other jarrah and karri forest blocks are proposed to be logged by the FPC to supply biomass logs to the energy sector?

Dr G.G. JACOBS replied:

- (1) The *Forest Management Plan 2004-2013* (FMP) provides for ecologically sustainable forest management, which includes the establishment of a reserve system, sustainable forest management practices and the availability of wood products that the Forest Products Commission (FPC) can sell under contract. The FMP provides for a specified annual sustained yield of jarrah and karri first and second grade sawlogs. In the process of harvesting these sawlogs, lower grade logs are obtained from the trees felled for sawlogs, and from thinnings and trees removed to promote regeneration. The FMP requires the Forest Products Commission to pursue additional markets for these lower grade logs that have previously been under-utilised, and the potential for some of these logs to be used as fuel is one option under investigation by the FPC. The FPC issued a request for tenders for approximately 250,000 tonnes per annum of low grade native forest logs in April 2008.

The FMP provides for the protection of old-growth forests in formal and informal conservation reserves and old growth forest is not available for timber harvesting including the provision of logs for fuel. The environmental assessment process managed by the Department and the standards for the protection of forest values including habitat, soil, and water are mechanisms in the FMP to ensure that timber harvesting is undertaken in a manner that is ecologically sustainable. Any removal of residue materials will need to meet the stringent environmental standards of the FMP.
- (2) No.
- (3)-(5) These questions should be directed to the Minister for Forestry as the Minister responsible for the Forest Products Commission.