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Media statement

FPC harvesting approved by EPA

The Forest Products Commission (FPC) has responded to recent statements reported in *The Collie Mail*, on Thursday, 19 February 2009.

FPC General Manager, Dr Paul Biggs, said “While it might not suit the views of certain individuals, the fact remains that all timber harvesting operations conducted by the FPC have been:

- proposed by the Conservation Commission
- recommended by the Environmental Protection Authority and
- approved by the Minister for the Environment.”

“FPC’s native forest operations are governed by the Forest Management Plan, which was developed with extensive public consultation, over a period of years. As part of that plan:

- all old growth forests in WA are protected from harvesting
- 1.26 million hectares of forest are held in national parks and nature reserves
- while only around 850,000 hectares are available for sustainable harvesting.”

“Ecologically sustainable timber harvesting has been judged to produce an acceptable environmental outcome by this state’s environmental regulators.”

“Based on that approval, the use of native forest timber as a source of sustainable energy was approved by the previous Government and that decision now provides an opportunity to replace some non-renewable coal with wood from regrowth forests.”

“As the harvested trees grow back, they will recapture the CO₂ emitted in the production of electricity. In fact, forestry is one of the only industries in the world which is helping to fight global warming.” (See diagram below.)

“At the same time, thinning our water catchments will provide an opportunity for more water to be captured to feed the growing South West.”

“This is a win-win situation for the environment and the South West economy.”

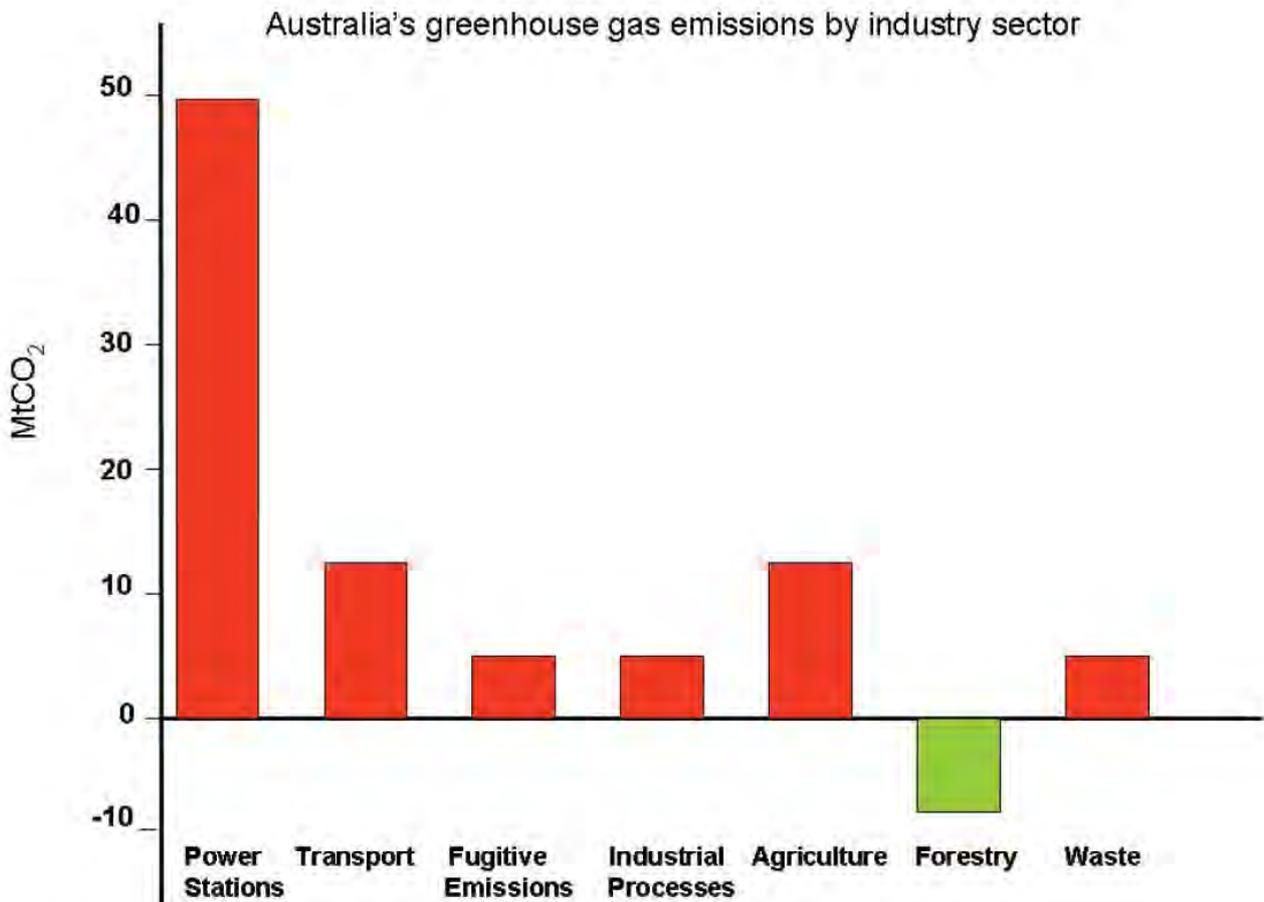


Diagram 3: Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by industry - note that forestry reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Source: Australian Greenhouse Office, 2008.

Source: Australian Greenhouse Office, 2008, reproduced in ForestWorks information sheet 01, available for download here:

<http://www.forestworks.com.au/multiversions/5498/FileName/Information%20Sheet%2001.pdf>

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