



**Don't bust our chops:** the native timber Industry says further cuts to volumes that can be harvested will only see a rise in imports from countries with inferior forestry standards.

Opposition to sustainable use of native forests is nothing short of environmental hypocrisy, says  
**PHILIP DALIDAKIS**

# Forestry facts are clear cut

**W**ith the United Nations convening in Bali next week and the issues of climate change and illegal logging hot on the agenda, it is important to consider all the facts regarding our own forestry industry; and not just the urban myths.

Currently, less than 0.14% of Victoria's total forest area is harvested for wood in any one year, and that is not a misprint!

Despite the often misinformed hysteria surrounding the timber industry and saw mills, we actually plant more trees than we harvest, with the State Government's own conservative estimation that two trees are replanted for every one harvested, resulting in a net gain to forest area - although that is apparently an inconvenient truth to many in the environment movement!

And unlike other resources, timber is renewable!

Meanwhile, given the increasing attention to climate change and the issue of carbon storage, it is also important to note that a tree harvested does not actually release the carbon unless it has decomposed or burnt.

This was best illustrated at our recent Annual Dinner, where we used a small paperweight made out of Red Gum timber to hold up the programs on our tables.

The paperweight that was no bigger than a clenched fist, stored 450 grams of carbon or 9 black balloons worth of greenhouse gas.

This is the equivalent of running your fridge for over four hours - all in one small piece of timber. If this many black balloons are stored in a paperweight, can you imagine the environmental benefits of having a timber floor in your home, or choosing a Victorian native timber desk for your office?

By using wood products, re-growing the resource and doing

this in a highly regulated, environmentally sustainable manner you can start to understand the immense positive contribution the entire timber industry makes towards the climate change challenge.

And it is in our everyday lives that the forest industry contributes most to. From the desks that we sit at in our offices, to the paper that we use in our printers; from the paper plates, cups and serviettes that we use when we're having a picnic with our families, to the timber frames and floors in our homes.

From our newspapers to our furniture, and from picture frames to our toilet paper and sanitary products, the timber industry is there in nearly everything we do

These timber based products have to come from somewhere and here in Victoria we have

a forest industry with a strong commitment to innovation, continuous improvement and environmental sustainability; one that works for the environment, not against it.

By locking up our forests, we are not ensuring a positive and sustainable environmental future for our climate but simply outsourcing significant environmental problems to countries where Government oversight, regulatory controls and environmentally sustainable practices are simply words in a dictionary.

And should that occur, that would be nothing short of environmental hypocrisy at its worst!

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