



Environmental benefits of timber

Timber is one of our most versatile renewable resources, and is also an important asset for maintaining a clean environment and reversing the effects of salinity.

Cleaning the air

Research shows the greenhouse effect is caused largely by the burning of fossil fuels, which in turn increases the concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere.

Burning wood to produce electricity is carbon neutral, because wood is a renewable resource made largely from solar energy.

Vigorously growing trees act as a sink and absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Trees also have the ability to store carbon in their wood fibres (known as carbon sequestration) until fire or decay releases it back into the atmosphere.

As trees mature, they become less able to absorb carbon, so it is important that they are regularly replaced with younger trees through thinning and harvesting.

Reducing fossil fuel use

The use of sawlogs for items such as building products, ensures the carbon in the wood remains stabilised for long periods, particularly when the timber is recycled. The manufacturing of products such as steel, aluminium and concrete, releases a large amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and none of these substances have the ability to store carbon in the manner wood fibre can.

Rough sawn timber uses less fossil fuel energy per unit than steel, aluminium and concrete, ensuring better energy consumption.

Wood is the most renewable material and the most sustainable of all primary industries. By turning our efforts towards increasing forest coverage and productivity, we can help preserve biodiversity and reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Renewing the land

Western Australia is feeling the effects of climate change and decreasing rainfall patterns. The state also contains more than 70% of Australia's reported dryland salinity and clearing of native vegetation has contributed to excess groundwater, soil salinity, water-logging and wind erosion.

“One of the best ways to address climate change is to use more wood, not less. Wood is simply the most abundant, biodegradable and renewable material on the planet.”

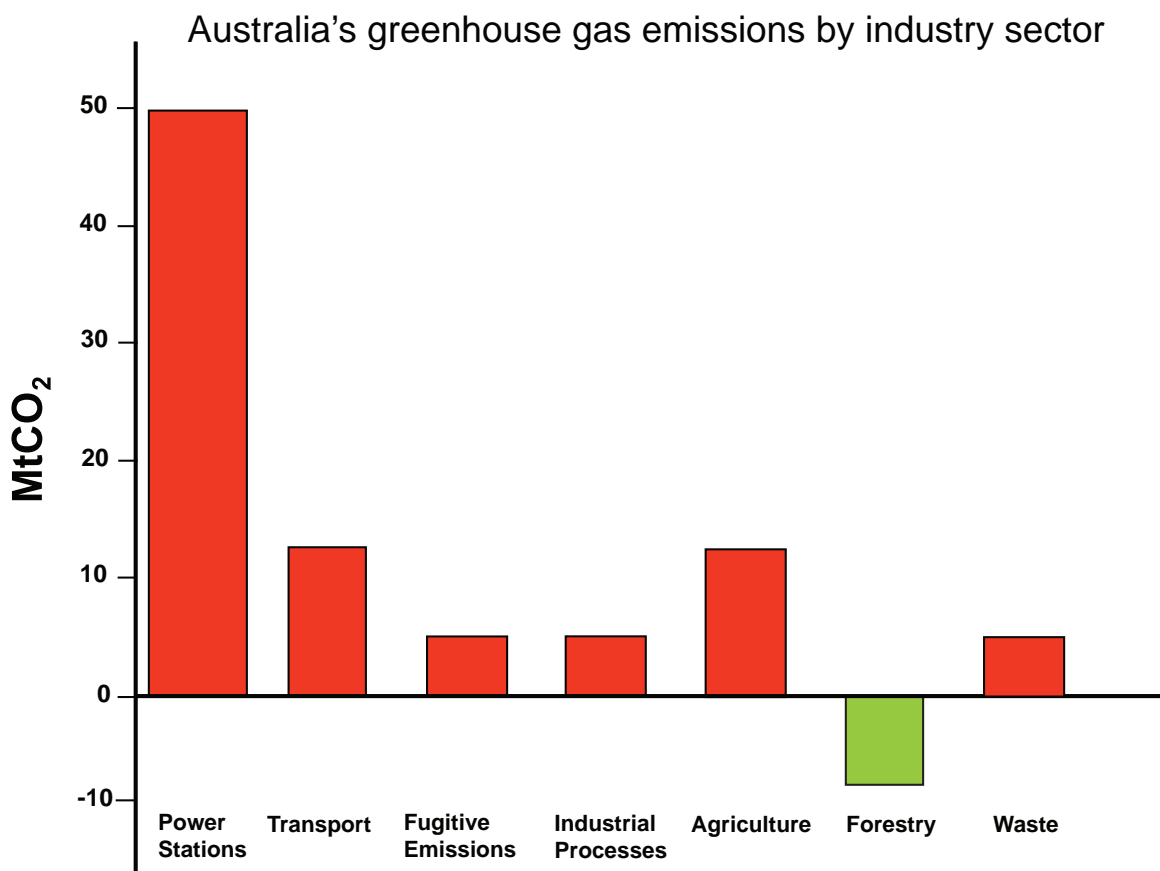
Patrick Moore Ph.D.(me), chairman and chief scientist of Greenspirit Strategies Ltd, and co-founder and former director of Greenpeace.

Combined, these factors have serious negative impacts on land profitability, health of remnant vegetation, wetland systems and biodiversity.

Since 2005, FPC has offered tailor-made tree farming options for landholders designed to deliver environmental, economic and social benefit in rural areas, particularly for those in medium rainfall areas.

Under this program, over 15,000 ha of tree crops have been established across Western Australia between 2005 – 2008, leading to increased on-farm income and benefits for landholders, development of rural industries and localised employment opportunities, and improved management of the water table in areas effected by extensive land clearing.

Traditionally, every year FPC plants more than 10 million new trees annually.



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

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