



The Hon Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

MEDIA RELEASE

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REMOVING BARRIERS TO RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION

Minister for Resources and Energy Anthony Roberts today announced changes to the *Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation* allowing two additional types of biomaterials to be burnt to generate electricity.

Mr Roberts said the additional biomaterials to be used for energy are invasive native species, the tree heads and offcuts of trees cut for sawlogs and trees that might otherwise be made into pulp for paper production.

“The new regulation is in line with the NSW Renewable Energy Action Plan to remove barriers to renewable energy production,” Mr Roberts said.

“The Regulation has been designed to ensure that there is no increase in the intensity of clearing or logging.

“Only biomaterial that is legally cleared in accordance with relevant approvals can be used to generate electricity.”

Mr Roberts said the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will require all private electricity operators to keep a detailed record of the amount of biomass they receive and burn and where this material comes from.

“The Forestry Corporation of NSW will publicly report on its website the volumes and areas where biomass is sourced from State Forests,” he said.

“This information will be reported on an individual State Forest basis, with the requirement to report formalised in the Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals (logging licences).

“Further, the EPA will audit this information, including using satellite imagery where appropriate to ensure environmental values are not compromised.”

Minister for Western NSW Kevin Humphries said the changes will provide the opportunity for Western NSW to become a leader in the development of renewable energy.

“In addition to the significant environmental benefits these changes will bring, they will also help to support a viable biomass industry that will bring jobs and investment into Western NSW,” Mr Humphries said.

“Western NSW has abundant biomaterial resources which will lead to a range of commercial opportunities to use these resources for electricity generation.”

Parliamentary Secretary for Renewable Energy, Rob Stokes, said that renewable energy plays an increasingly important role in NSW's energy mix.

"The Liberals & Nationals Government will continue to roll out the actions in the Renewable Energy Action Plan to facilitate renewable energy generation across NSW," Mr Stokes said.

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