

Bell Bay Mill will be climate change positive

The proposed Gunns Bell Bay Pulp Mill will have a positive effect on climate change, a public forum will be told tonight.

Gunns Resource and Sustainability Manager Calton Frame will tell the Environment Tasmania public forum in Launceston that the mill will contribute to a lessening of greenhouse gas emissions.

“An independent assessment of the mill’s carbon footprint by leading Australian environmental consultants Pacific Air & Environment found the mill would reduce greenhouse emissions by 1.1 million tonnes a year,” Mr Frame said.

“By generating clean and green electricity which will replace fossil fuel energy, and reducing transport emissions, this mill will make a positive contribution towards climate change.”

“The mill will generate enough green electricity as a by-product of the pulping process to power Launceston.

Water sourced for the mill from Hydro Tasmania will not increase current amounts of water taken from Lake Trevallyn, with the mill providing 90mw of surplus power with that water compared to less than 1mw Hydro Tasmania currently produces at the Trevallyn power station.

“There will also be a substantial reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the shipping currently required to export woodchips.

“Exporting of pulp compared to woodchips will lead to a four fold reduction in shipping movements.”

Mr Frame also said the mill would not cause any increase in logging.

“Woodchips we currently ship overseas will now be processed in Tasmania – there will be no extra logging,” he said.

“We also have a target of using 100 per cent plantation timber at the mill within five years of commencement. The mill will never use old growth forests.”

“The power boilers will use residual woodchip material, sawmilling off-cuts and forest harvesting residues which are currently not utilised”.

Modern pulp mills are internationally renowned as being extremely efficient bio-energy plants.

“This will be the greenest pulp mill in the world, with advanced electrostatic precipitators to capture emissions and dedicated back-up gas fired incinerators to eliminate odours.

Mr Frame said the mill would create up to 2000 direct and indirect jobs for Tasmania during the operating phase of the mill, with significantly more during the construction phase.

“We are very pleased to have the opportunity to continue to inform the Launceston and Tamar Valley communities about the benefits the mill will bring, as well as dispel some inaccurate information,” he said.

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