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MEDIA RELEASE



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7.30 Report gets it wrong on the PULP MILL – Again

On Wednesday night the ABC's 7.30 Report incorrectly claimed that the proposed Bell Bay pulp mill will have marine emissions including an estimated dioxin load released per year of "0.8 grams per year". The interviewer later corrected his error to state 0.08 grams.

TCA research shows that 0.08 grams is the correct figure released publicly in response to submissions on the EPBC Act approval. No wonder the Federal Minister had not heard of the ABC's incorrect figure!

"This is an absolutely outrageous mistake considering the importance of this proposed new mill for Tasmania." Mr. Barry Chipman, Tasmanian State Manager of Timber Communities Australia said today

The 7:30 Report claimed that proposed Tasmanian mill's dioxin output was equal to 80% of Sweden's total pulp mill output, by calculation this means that 1.0 grams per year (but corrected to 0.1g) are produced from the claimed 47 Swedish pulp mills.

Research also shows that based on instrument detection limits it is actually calculated to be 1.7 grams for the total production of comparable pulp mills in Sweden.

This actual figure is a bit hard to quantify as the detection limit is 10 parts per quadrillion, and both country's modern ECF pulp mills are less than the detection limit per litre of treated effluent.

TCA also found that many of the 47 Swedish pulp mills are not ECF but use a range of mechanical and chemical treatments to breakdown and then bleach the pulp.

ECF bleaching in Sweden, (the same process to be applied for the proposed Bell Bay pulp mill) produces yearly, 5.5 million tonnes of pulp; this is 5 times the maximum output of the proposed Bell Bay mill. (As reported by RPDC consultants)

"Put simply the proposed Bell Bay Mill will have similar dioxin content to Swedish ECF pulp mills. And the real figures show that the Bell Bay mill's treated effluent will be clean and green just as it is in Sweden."

This is the second major error on dioxins by the 7.30 Report in July they reported that the dioxin could taint the scallop catch.

Yesterday the Government released a report on a survey of the seabed surrounding the outfall pipeline:

It found "low densities of predominately undersize scallops observed within this area, this region could not currently be fished commercially, and as such could not be described as a productive scallop bed. Given the large areas of unsuitable scallop habitat, it is also unlikely that this area will, on its own, ever support a commercial scallop bed".

This latest Government report confirms a survey undertaken by scallop fishermen themselves in 2005 that also confirmed that there were no commercial scallops or potential scallop beds in the outfalls area.

This means that there are no commercial scallops to be tainted even if the concentration was not already extremely low.

"Timber Communities Australia members expect that the 7.30 report will correct their incorrect claims."

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