

# AF&PA says EPA tailoring rule undermines renewable energy from biomass

WASHINGTON, DC, May 14, 2010 (Press Release) - American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) President and CEO Donna Harman made the following statement on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Greenhouse Gas Tailoring Rule, issued this week:

"The EPA's action hurts rural communities by endangering family wage American jobs and reversing economic development in communities that need it the most.

"We are deeply disappointed the EPA failed to reaffirm its own precedent and the internationally-recognized carbon neutrality of biomass. This rule treats biomass fuels identically to fossil fuels, in effect undermining the Administration's support for renewable energy policy in this country. The forest products industry is proud of its voluntary reductions in greenhouse gases and our increasing reliance on domestically grown, renewable and carbon neutral biomass to power our mills - all of which are important for a sustainable future.

"Biomass is the renewable fuel that forest products facilities use for two-thirds of their energy needs as an alternative to fossil fuels. Emissions from the combustion of biomass historically have not been included in greenhouse gas reduction policies because biomass combustion does not increase carbon in the atmosphere when the overall biomass stock is renewed. When biomass is burned for energy, it releases carbon dioxide that was captured from the atmosphere back into the atmosphere. As trees are replanted, this carbon is reabsorbed, repeating the cycle. EPA's own data show that the biomass carbon cycle in the U.S. removes more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than it emits. This rule undermines this important precedent and jeopardizes public and private investment in biomass-based renewable energy, which is fundamental to existing and future green jobs in rural communities hit hard by the economic downturn.

"This rule is another example of why the Clean Air Act is the wrong tool to regulate greenhouse gases. New investment in manufacturing and clean energy technologies runs counter to the arcane and rigid set of rules and regulations that are being triggered by the use of the Clean Air Act to regulate greenhouse gases. These rules have developed around localized pollutants and are not well suited to address the global realities of greenhouse gases.

"Congress, not the EPA, is in the best position to make the trade-offs that will be needed to ensure future global competitiveness for the forests products industry and other energy intensive, traded exposed industries that employ millions of hard working Americans and contribute to our nation's economic well being."

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