

To: submissions@ipcn.nsw.gov.au

Date: Sunday 17th August 2025

Submission: Opposing Redbank Power Station Biomass proposal

I **do not** support this submission. I urge the rejection of the proposal in favour of investment in sustainable net-zero energy generation.

My concerns are:

Verdant Earth Technologies proposes to [restart the Redbank Power Station](#) near Singleton to burn native vegetation for fuel. This vegetation needs to be transported 700 km to Singleton. In its first year – the project would source 500,000 tonnes of biomass from the clearing of regrowth indigenous forests and scrub in western NSW that have been controversially classified as “*invasive native species*”.

How can native and indigenous to only one place on earth be classified as invasive?

This incorrectly classified forest consists of native flora unique to this area. These include cypress pine woodlands, creeks lined with coolabah trees and river red gums, patches of Eremophila covered in flowers. Wattles, gum trees, she-oaks, tea trees, native cherries. Many plants are found nowhere else on earth. These plants are sustainable because the plants have evolved to grow in this region on these soils. They can only grow here and support life that can only live here.

This incorrect classification loophole enables landowners to clear native scrub to increase agricultural productivity, rather than maintain ecological integrity – one that is diversity unique.

Once the need for more native forest is there this loophole can be extended by future Government's to destroy more forests.

And now this project wants farmers those to provide them with thousands of hectares of “*invasive native scrub*” so they can truck it up to 700km to Singleton to produce energy. To make profit for themselves while destroying the native bush and degrading the farmers' land. *How can farmers plant new purpose-grown crops in degraded land?* The soil will have blown away or any soil left is degraded and can no longer support viable or purpose-grown crop agriculture.

Transporting biomass for 700 km requires much transport and road use. The plans for sourcing fuel assumes that 42 tonne capacity B-double trucks move to and from the power station 112 times PER DAY to haul the required biomass feedstock in and the resulting ash out. That is more than one truck in and out every half hour on average and equates to 20,238 trips per year. *This is a lot of heavy traffic on the roads and much road and highway wear and tear to be funded by taxpayers who also wear the inconvenience and disruption of this endless flow of trucks.*

This unsustainable market would drive further destruction of the outstanding bushlands of the state's west. Since more bush will be required to feed those ever hungry furnaces.

Once the bushland and native trees are removed the soil is left unprotected. Once the trees are gone they cannot be regrown at the same rate as the land is cleared. *What happens to this unprotected soil?* Unprotected becomes degraded and blows away causing dust storms stripping the land of its soil. Think the dust storms that collapsed agriculture in America's mid-west in the 1930s. The land is destroyed and all that once grew here is gone forever along with the fauna if once fed and sheltered.

Why does this matter to me?

The project is proposing to burn native vegetation from land clearing to produce energy, before switching to purpose-grown crops. The proposed 700,000 tonnes of dry biomass to be burned annually will not be carbon neutral – it threatens biodiversity. This in turn undermines all existing NSW's climate and conservation goals. E.g. Burning vegetation puts carbon dioxide into the air, so carbon storage is lost. Trees lock carbon away.

This project is aimed to run for 4 years. Because of the loopholes in classifying this unique flora as invasive weed enables future governments to allow more native forests to be burned. This land clearing and associated habitat fragmentation is one of the biggest threats to biodiversity in NSW. This will continue because of the future provision of incentives for land clearing. All to feed the furnaces for electricity generation and profits that go elsewhere.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) fails to assess off-site impacts – The EIS only considers impacts on the 18ha of land the power station sits on, ignoring the potential biodiversity impacts from the thousands of hectares of land clearing required off-site. *How can this be properly assessed when it does not consider the vast areas of land being cleared?*

This proposal is more exploitation of NSW land management rules that are unequivocally failing nature and that are currently under review by the Natural Resources Commission.

Land clearing and associated habitat fragmentation is already one of the greatest threats to biodiversity in NSW, threatening endangered species and ecosystems. *Do we require any more projects to threaten NSW biodiversity further?*

True net-zero projects should be prioritised over projects that add increased carbon to the atmosphere. This project will only increase and exacerbate the current situation.

In 'Appendix L: Life Cycle Submission' Verdent mention that 'if biogenic carbon emissions are captured before being released to the atmosphere, e.g. through bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) this could result in an overall greenhouse gas removal' yet it is unclear from their proposal whether this technology will be used. For any biomass project – carbon capture should be a requirement. It is the lack of this commitment and implementation that will lead to:

Burning trees causing air pollution. This pollution causes many problems.

Biomass has negative and unjust health impacts including releasing deadly air pollution. *Burning is not a clean air solution.*

Burning biomass can have even more significant public health impacts than burning coal. *It will affect people with respiratory ailments and affect those with these issues.*

The lifecycle analysis of the project shows that the release of 'CFCs' which contribute to ozone depletion are more than four times higher than burning coal. *So why is this project even being considered?*

I suffer from asthma and air pollution is a huge issue for me and my well-being. Australia is the skin cancer capital of the world more ozone depletion will increase skin cancer.

I also care about nature and misuse of land by non-sustainable land management and farming practices. Good and sustainable use of land enables all life to continue to thrive and prosper well.

The better alternative is the way to go

To reach our renewable energy goals NSW should focus on high value cleaner energy solutions like solar and wind power. France used tidal power in Northern France to provide green electricity. The tide comes in and out twice a day. They thought outside the box and found a new reliable green energy solution that was viable to this region. *Can't we do the same in Australia?* We must find better ways to manage the land and provide green sustainable non-polluting energy.

Thank you for this opportunity to present my opposition and concerns.

Lesley Killen (Ms.)