



11<sup>th</sup> April 2024

## **SUBMISSION**

### **Restart of Redbank Power Station SSD – 56284960**

The Clarence Valley Conservation Coalition (CVCC) is a community group based in the Clarence Valley in the NSW Northern Rivers. Formed in 1988, the CVCC has been involved with environmental issues – both locally and further afield – since that time. It has an ongoing interest in the sustainable management of native forests and in the protection of our biodiversity at a time when it is increasingly under threat. It also has an ongoing interest in the provision of energy which is appropriate in a carbon-constrained world.

The CVCC strongly opposed an earlier attempt to reopen Redbank Power Station using biomass as fuel. It is strongly opposed to this latest attempt to push through this irresponsible proposal because of the impact it would have on biodiversity as well as the carbon emissions it would generate at time when we should be urgently reducing carbon emissions rather than adding to them.

Our major concerns about the proposal include:

1. Land clearing, which is already a major issue in NSW and a significant threat to our biodiversity, will be drastically increased as 850,000 tonnes of biomass will be required as fuel for the power station each year. Areas in proximity to the Hunter are likely to suffer significant vegetation loss leading to further loss of habitat which will worsen the current biodiversity crisis. As the years go by, this impact is likely to increase further afield as the closer sources of biomass run out.
2. Land clearing and associated habitat fragmentation are the single greatest threat to biodiversity in NSW. Despite this most clearing is unapproved and the approval process requires no surveys to identify habitat of threatened species. This expansion of land clearing will lead to local extinctions which may in time lead to extinctions across a wider area.
3. Burning 850,000 tonnes of biomass each year will release over 1.3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in each year. Quite obviously Redbank will not be producing clean energy. Furthermore, the impact of this proposed power station on carbon emissions extends further than the

burning of the biomass. There will be very significant emissions from the debris and soils in the clearing sites and from the processing and transport of the woodchips. Australia is currently not doing nearly enough to limit its carbon emissions. If this project goes ahead, it will exacerbate our carbon emissions problem.

4. Burning wood is far more polluting than coal. It is not just the pollution from CO<sub>2</sub> but from a range of toxins which will be released into the atmosphere following the biomass burning. Burning wood results in serious atmospheric pollution and potential impacts to human health.

**The CVCC urges you to reject this proposal.**

Leonie Blain  
Hon Secretary