

Sent: Wednesday, 16 July 2008 1:41 PM  
To: RRAT, Committee (SEN)  
Subject: tax credit for tree plantings

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing concerning the Inquiry into the Implementation, Operation and Administration of the Legislation Underpinning Carbon Sink Forests, out of my concern for tax credits given under current legislation for planting of trees, purportedly because they act as effective carbon sinks. Planting trees as carbon sinks is no substitute for ancient underground carbon stores of coal, oil and gas. I think proposing that they are and using this as some sort of solution rather than seriously curbing our carbon emissions is taking us in the wrong direction. If we plant forest to absorb carbon then we are only reabsorbing carbon that was released from a forest that would have been cleared from that sight in the last couple of centuries since European settlement of Australia; It seems it won't even start to cut into fossil fuel emissions. On top of this there is no legal enforcement to ensure that the forest is even maintained, which means that it may well achieve nothing at all.

Don't give tax credits for an unmanaged, inadequate remedial measure. Tax the release of carbon, the massive increase of which in the ocean and atmosphere being a problem we probably can't turn around. We do not now have any viable large scale way to capture and store carbon into perpetuity, and we very well may never have a one. The best thing to do is leave that carbon deep underground.

Tom Street