

# Biomass & Forests



Biomass, or bioenergy, creates energy by burning living materials like plants and trees. The wood pellet industry uses trees to make wood pellets. It then ships them to Europe and Asia and burns them in power plants to create electricity. **Wood pellet plants are as dirty and problematic as coal plants.**

Southern forests clean our air and water, protect us from storms and floods, and provide homes and food for wildlife. When companies log these forests, those benefits disappear. The US South exports more wood pellets than anywhere else in the world. About 180,000 acres of forests in the Southeast are cut each year for the wood pellet industry. **For each ton of wood pellets produced, 24,000 acres of forest are destroyed.**

While landowners may replant destroyed trees, they are not required to do so by law. Planted trees (tree farms) take a long time to grow and do not offer the same benefits as natural forests.



There are now more frequent natural disasters, including hurricanes, floods, heat waves, and wildfires. Scientists have linked these events to increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. **The biomass industry is as bad for the environment as fossil fuels like coal or natural gas.** The biomass industry is destroying forests that help protect us from natural disasters.

In areas with clearcuts, flooding spreads more quickly and is more dangerous. Forests absorb carbon dioxide in their stems, branches, and roots, keeping it out of the atmosphere. Forests also absorb water through their roots and can decrease flooding after a hurricane or storm.

**If you're living near a wood pellet plant, you deserve to know your risks. Learn more about what you can do to prevent further damage to your lungs and your community at the link below.**



Find out more at [dogwoodalliance.org/biomass-forests](https://dogwoodalliance.org/biomass-forests)