

Forests Store Carbon

Timber is Greenhouse Gas Friendly

Forestry is the only Australian industry sector that stores more greenhouse gases than it releases. In 2001, Australia's plantations and managed forests stored a net 22.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. This is more than half of the carbon dioxide (42.5 Mt) emitted by all the passenger cars in Australia in that year.

Greenhouse and Forestry

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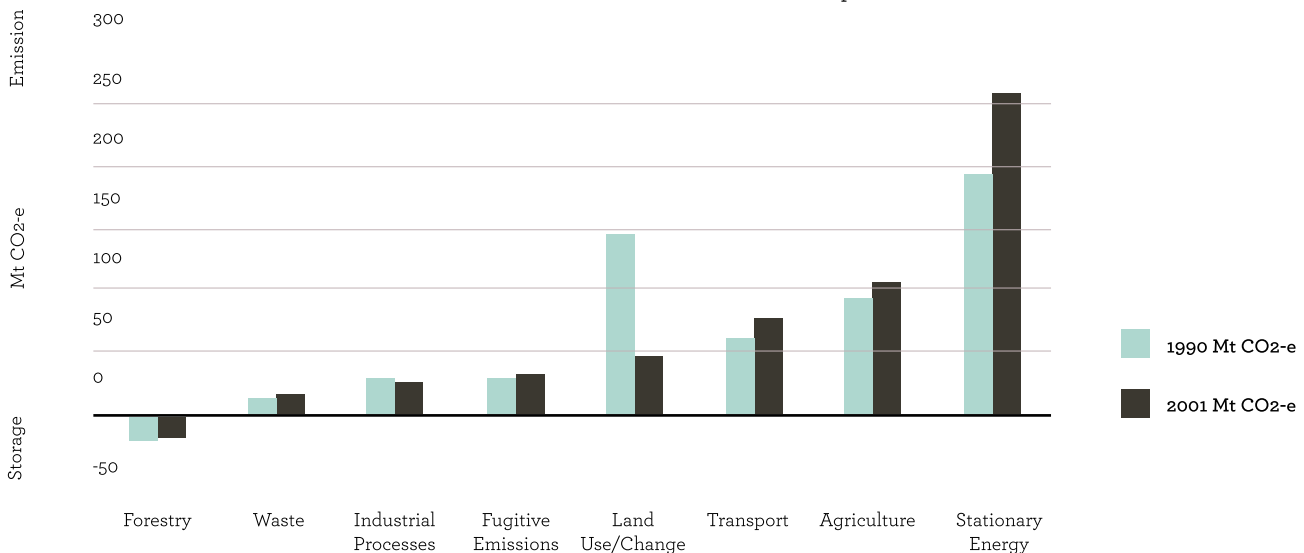
Greenhouse gases are a natural part of the atmosphere. They trap the sun's warmth and maintain the earth's surface temperature at a level necessary to support life. Human activities associated with the industrial era are increasing the concentrations of these gases in the atmosphere, creating the prospect of global climate change.

Greenhouse gas emissions include three gases: carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide that are usually combined for reporting and called carbon dioxide equivalents.

Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory estimated Australia's emissions for 2001 as a total of 542.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. Emissions from stationary energy (including electricity generation) accounted for 259.5 million tonnes, road transport (cars and trucks) made up 88% of the 77.2 million tonnes emitted by the transport sector. Cars and station wagons emitted 44.4 million tonnes of greenhouse gases.

Emissions from land use, land use change and forestry have dropped significantly since 1990, falling from 120.4 to 25.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This is due to growth in the nation's plantation estate and significant reduction in land clearing.

Growth of managed forests and plantations provided a greenhouse sink of 79.1 Mt in 2001, more than offsetting the 56.5 Mt emissions from harvesting and collecting fuel wood. No other industry sector in the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory acts as a positive carbon sink.



Source

Australian Green House Office, National Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2000



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