

Questions for Dorothy Thompson: 1/11/17.

All questions are fully referenced. Please use the links to do your own reading after this event.

1) Hasn't this year's report on biomass and climate by Chatham House ¹shown that burning wood for electricity generation is worse for the climate than burning fossil fuels and how would you like to respond to the report's author, Duncan Brack who said on Channel 4, "We should instead be putting our money into zero-carbon technologies such as solar, wind, tidal or energy efficiency. We are taking stored carbon out of forests and burning it and we are subsidising that, which isn't a good use of public money."²

2) According to UK Government data, there are just two possible scenarios in which Drax's wood pellets could be from sustainable forestry meaning that CO₂ is reabsorbed faster than it is emitted. These are when they are from:

-An already existing pine plantation which would revert to an unmanaged (harvested only every 50 years) state without the demand for wood pellets **OR**

- It's from a plantation that would be converted to agricultural land without the demand for wood pellets. ³

Why will Drax not allow independent verification that your suppliers Enviva are managing forests in this way?

3) Much of Drax's justification for burning biomass is that it's displacing the burning of coal. But in the light of the rapid decline

¹ <https://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/woody-biomass-power-and-heat-impacts-global-climate>

² <http://www.ethicalcorp.com/report-ignites-debate-over-biomass-climate-solution>

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/600477/PED60674_final_report_270416_Tec_Report_FINAL_v2_AMENDMENTS_ACCEP_TED.pdf

of coal – which supplied only 2% of UK power in the first half of this year and which is due to end altogether by 2025- isn't this justification becoming irrelevant?⁴

4) Taxpayers have to pay huge subsidies to Drax for burning biomass- as much as £1.5 million every day. ⁵Don't you think people would prefer to put this money into subsidising wind, solar and tidal power as well as energy efficiency programmes and research and development into storage technology?

5) We're witnessing rapid advances in battery storage in the UK. Not only do we see actual plants like the new 10MW mega battery in Sheffield and the 45 MW plants being built in Barrow-on-Furness and West Burton ⁶but we're also seeing a huge shift in Government policy with the launching of £246 million of research into battery technology.⁷ Doesn't this blow out of the water the argument that we need biomass and coal as baseload power to protect us from intermittent wind and solar?

6) Six weeks ago the UK Energy Research Centre produced a report showing how the UK's domestic energy could be cut in half by efficiency measures such as deploying solid wall insulation, heat pumps and demand management technology. This dwarfs the amount generated by Drax doesn't it? ⁸

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www.kirkleescampaignagainstclimatechange.wordpress.com**

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/jul/19/how-coal-lost-power-britain>

⁵ <http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/axedrax-campaign/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/09/uk-first-mega-battery-plant-come-online-sheffield-eon-renewable-energy>

⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/jul/24/household-batteries-will-be-key-to-uks-new-energy-strategy>

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/jul/24/business-secretary-to-announce-investment-in-battery-technology>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/06/better-energy-efficiency-measures-could-cut-uk-costs-by-75bn>