



Media Release

24 AUGUST 2018

Boral could turn sawmill residue into renewable diesel

The Mid North Coast of New South Wales could become home to the world's first biorefinery turning sawmill residues into renewable diesel and renewable bitumen.

On behalf of the Australian Government, the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has announced up to \$500,000 in funding to Boral Timber, a subsidiary of Boral Limited, to investigate the feasibility of building a 'second-generation' biofuels refinery using the waste sawmill residues from the Boral Timber Hardwood Sawmill at Herons Creek near Port Macquarie.

Under the \$1.2 million study, Boral will explore the technical and financial viability of establishing a biorefinery using innovative technology, which would be located near the Herons Creek sawmill.

If the study is successful, the proposed biorefinery, which would cost an estimated \$50 million to build, could convert up to 50,000 tonnes of waste sawmill residue produced each year into transport-grade renewable diesel and bitumen.

The sawmill residue - which includes sawdust, remnant woodchips, shavings and offcuts - is currently used for lower value uses such as landscaping and boiler fuel.

The study will consider a mechanical catalytic conversion technology, developed by Spanish-based Global Ecofuel Solutions SL, combined with the potential biorefinery at Herons Creek and will be the first time the process would be used in a production scale facility.

ARENA CEO Ivor Frischknecht said the project further shows that big businesses are increasingly moving towards renewable energy solutions.

"The transport sector is a significant user of energy in Australia, with liquid fuels a key long term energy source for heavy-vehicle road and air transport since they cannot readily be electrified. Bioenergy comprises a growing proportion of Australia's energy mix, and this new technology could see residue from the production process be used to reduce Boral's reliance on diesel and bitumen derived from fossil fuels," he said.

ARENA media contacts:
0410 724 227
media@arena.gov.au

**For more
information**
arena.gov.au

“If this ground-breaking technology is successful, we hope to see a transition to similar biorefineries by other companies which have a waste stream in forestry or agriculture,” Mr Frischknecht said.

Boral Executive General Manager (Building Products) Wayne Manners said that if the feasibility study was successful, the transport-grade renewable diesel produced at the potential new biorefinery could eventually account for up to 15 per cent of Boral’s annual diesel needs.

Boral is one of the largest consumers of bitumen and has one of the largest truck fleets in Australia, using approximately 100 million litres of diesel each year.

“The application of this technology has the potential to transform the way we use low value hardwood sawmill residues into a resource that could be highly valuable not just to Boral but to the industry more generally,” he said.

For further information, visit arena.gov.au or boral.com.au