

## **MEDIA ALERT: Drax's carbon capture plans create blackout risk for thousands of families – experts comment**

[New documents](#) released by Drax power station have exposed its plans to *reduce* energy production and focus instead on capturing carbon. Experts are now warning that this could leave thousands of families at risk of blackouts – and in its pursuit of carbon capture technology to win more government subsidies, Drax is risking energy security as well as the climate.

The documents were included in Drax's application to build the world's largest carbon capture and storage project, and they indicate that the power station will produce much less energy as a result. This is because energy is needed to capture, compress, transport, and bury the carbon dioxide that Drax produces – and this reduces the energy available to the national grid and homes. Drax's own figures suggest that the energy it can produce for the UK from two biomass units would fall by nearly one third (28%). This is the same amount of electricity needed to supply almost 41,000 homes.

Experts point out that Carbon Capture and Storage is an untested technology and that the true energy cost could be even bigger, especially when compared to genuine renewable energy like wind and solar. Carbon Capture and Storage technology does not benefit the climate as much as Drax claims. Many greenhouse gases are caused in the forest where trees are cut down – due to soil disturbance and because trees stop absorbing carbon. These greenhouse gases can never be captured at the power station and so make a significant contribution to climate change. Currently, around half of Drax's wood comes directly from forests in places like the US, Canada, and Estonia, putting them and the wildlife and people they support in danger.

### **Experts comment:**

**Almuth Ernsting, Co-Director of Biofuelwatch says:** "Drax's BECCS proposal is a blatant attempt to secure more subsidies, with zero regard for people struggling with energy bills nor for the climate. The technology they propose is entirely unproven, but if it was to work, it would result in Drax burning as many trees as today in order to generate significantly less electricity. Money and time would be better spent on truly renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, instead of investing public funds into an ecologically damaging industry."

**Elly Pepper, Senior Advocate for [NRDC \(Natural Resources Defense Council\)](#) and [Cut Carbon Not Forests](#), says:** "Drax's carbon capture plans are bad news for the climate and for keeping the lights on. The company has shown it can't be trusted with the environment, and now it's showing it can't be trusted with the UK's energy security. This is a bad bet for two reasons: capturing carbon uses a lot of energy, leaving a lot less for families and homes; relying on burning wood keeps the UK hooked on imports of foreign materials that can fluctuate wildly in price just like gas and oil. The cheapest, most secure ways to keep the lights on and bring down bills are building more wind, solar and investing in home energy efficiency measures. Instead, the UK Government is paying Drax over £1 billion every year to burn the world's forests."