

Media Release

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Fake bushfire research thrown out by independent journal

In a major blow for activists campaigning against Australia's sustainably managed native forest industries, a widely disseminated research paper falsely linking the activity to bushfires has been rejected.

The research paper; *Propensities of Old Growth, Mature and Regrowth Wet Eucalypt Forest, and Eucalyptus Nitens Plantation, to Burn during Wildfire and Suffer Fire-Induced Crown Death*, Winoto-Lewin, S. and Sanger, J. et al. was published in the journal *Fire* in May.

In an almost unheard of move, the journal has now announced it is immediately disassociating itself from the article and apologising for its publication after [discovering numerous errors in the research](#).

The journal has been applauded for its decisive and honourable action, and Sanger and Winoto-Lewin condemned for their discredited research, by a growing list of stakeholders. This list includes the Institute of Foresters Australia, the Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Senator Jonno Duniham, the Tasmanian Minister for Natural Resources Guy Barnett and the Tasmanian Shadow Minister for Resources Shane Broad.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) Ross Hampton said, "This research was promoted by the researchers under the banner of the University of Tasmania. I shall be writing to the Vice Chancellor asking what measures will be taken to undo the wrong which it has done. The research also prompted a slew of media articles. I will be contacting all those outlets seeking corrections. I shall also be ensuring that all politicians, federal and state, with an interest in forest industries, ensuring they understand the research has been exposed as wrong."

"The scientific consensus is that there is no causal link between timber harvesting in Australia and overall increased bushfire severity. When one considers that native forestry uses the equivalent of 6 trees out of every 10,000, and areas used are regenerated by law, the areas in question are so small the proposition is patently absurd."

The Chief Executive of the Tasmanian Forest Products Association (TFPA) Nick Steel said, "Both the Bob Brown Foundation (BBF) and the Tasmanian Greens have used this report to attack forestry in our state. After a long period of calm in our forests these groups seem to be attempting to reignite the 'forest wars' and this dodgy research was just one more example of that. Tasmanians are over the debate. Sustainable forestry continues to play an important part in the regional Tasmanian economy – never more obvious than when tourism is suffering so badly due to COVID-19. It is time these activists accepted that."

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