

## Media Release

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### **AFPA calls on native forestry critics to drop the weapons and join the battle against climate change**

The Australian Forest Products Association (AFPA) says a landmark study into the Black Summer bushfires confirming timber harvesting operations do not increase bushfire severity, and that the biggest factor is climate change, is an opportunity for all sides of the native forestry debate to join together to fight the real threat to our native forests and threatened species.

The report, [\*The severity and extent of the Australia 2019–20 Eucalyptus forest fires are not the legacy of forest management\*](#) just published in the Nature Ecology and Evolution Journal, was authored by a team of researchers led by Professor David Bowman from the University of Tasmania. As Professor Bowman told [\*The Conversation\*](#) their research found forest harvesting, “had little, if any, effect on the Black Summer bushfires. Rather, the disaster’s huge extent and severity were more likely due to unprecedented drought and sustained hot, windy weather” and “our research confirms the devastating role climate change played in the Black Summer fires.”

AFPA Chief Executive Officer Ross Hampton said, “Since the Black Summer fires a number of activists have tried to link sustainable forest harvesting to bushfire severity. Last year one of those attempts, using what the Australian Senate called ‘bodgy science’, led to a [journal article being retracted](#) and an [investigation launched](#) into the research methods used by its authors.”

“This landmark report and its findings should be the catalyst for this war of words to come to an end and allow all sides to focus on combating climate change.”

“Those who want to shutdown sustainable native forestry in Australia are at odds with the global environmental leaders who know we need more, not less, fibre from sustainably managed estates like ours where only 6 trees out of 10,000 are harvested and every tree used is replaced by law.”

The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) 4<sup>th</sup> Assessment](#) concluded: *A sustainable forest management strategy aimed at maintaining or increasing forest carbon stocks, while producing an annual sustained yield of timber, fibre or energy from the forest, will generate the largest sustained mitigation benefit.*

“That report and the findings of this new research released this week are the starting point for an end to the argument over if forestry has an impact on bushfires and move towards a united front on the common enemy of climate change,” Mr Hampton concluded.

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