



Nature.Net submission to independent expert 2019-20 NSW Bushfire Inquiry

Dear Professor Mary O’Kane and Dave Owens,

Thank you for your commitment. We wish you both well in historically important work over coming months. Scientific and other facts will sustain your credibility after your independent expert **NSW Bushfire Report**.

Summary of our Nature.Net submission: **NSW ToR : Causes and contributing factors**

i.e. ‘The causes of, and factors contributing to, the frequency, intensity, timing and location of bushfires in NSW in the 2019-20 bushfire season, including consideration of any role of climate change, weather, drought, fuel loads and human activity’.

18-Mar-20 in Batemans Bay, ‘**Climate Change**’ was clearly the unwelcome ‘**elephant in the room**’ when two Royal Commissioners from the Australian Government’s ‘*Black Summer*’ Bushfire Inquiry met our six community representatives face-to-face for two hours. The Commission Chair, along with his anonymous ‘PM Adviser’, discouraged our majority view that our local fire experience matched scientific advice *climate change is the ‘underlying cause’* of unprecedented catastrophic 2019/2020 Forest Fires in South East Australia.

Nature.Net is addressing our ‘*Kosciuszko-to-Coast*’ landscape, 80% in State Forests & National Parks:

1. **Diverse climate change** across ‘K2C’ spans from Australia’s highest peak to South Coastline Forests.
2. Fire Agencies’ GIS Data *proves National Park fuel loads* are a minor problem beyond ‘Built Assets’.
3. ‘**Human activity**’ logging, Eden wood-chipping & burning makes our **State Forests** more fire prone*.
*30-year logging & fire history from Professor David Lindenmayer (*Canberra University 18-Feb-20*). Logging opens the canopy, dries out the understory & results in densely packed ‘stick-like’ regrowth. Forest Corp. says 80% of our Eden & Southern Forests burnt last summer, 75% started by lightning.
4. **State Forests today** are our biggest source of GHG emissions & smoke pollution in South East NSW. Nature.Net is developing a K2C ‘**100-year State Forests Carbon Credit**’ Proposal to the NSW Govt. **First**, stop logging emissions & deliver ‘carbon capture & storage’ in our *publicly-owned* native forests. **Next**, pay private landowners to invest in ‘Carbon Forestry’. **Both** may deliver ‘**Zero Emissions by 2050**’. **Jobs** (e.g. Youth & Aboriginal) can be funded by the *Carbon Credit* in each K2C Local Government Area.

Nature.Net’s principal consultant, Mike Thompson has relevant experience in above, *including*:

- Former IBM Australia executive (15 years), then became independent Business Strategy consultant.
- 2013 Minister Hunt invited Mike to a ‘Train-the-Trainers’ *Carbon Farming Initiative* workshop.
- Member of Australia’s *Carbon Marketing Institute* (CMI) & meets Ministers at Carbon ‘Summits’.
- Member of Australia’s *Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC Social Chamber) - *Carbon Forestry* focus.
- Member of NCC’s *Forest Working Group* & NPA(NSW) rep. for Far South Coast & K2C Executive.
- Organiser of *EDEN VISION Event* 27-Jan-19, with Eden LALC & Business/Tourism supporters.
- Organiser of 4th ‘*Australian Forests & Climate Action Forum*’ at ANU (next date to be confirmed).

Recommendation #1: Please provide bi-partisan leadership from our Australian Governments on ‘global climate action’ to address the ‘underlying cause’ of Australia’s 2019/2020 South East Forest Fires.

Recommendation #2: Fund jobs via our NSW/K2C Land/Forest Carbon Credit ‘Nature-based Solution’.