



Dear Inspector-General of Emergency Management Tony Pearce,

I would like to make a submission to the Inquiry into the [2019-20](#) Victorian fire season. My personal details are below:

**Name:** Tamsin Kelly

**Email:** 

**Gender:**

**Age:** 55-64

**Privacy preference:** I would like the Inspector-General to make my submission publicly available

**My personal story of the fires:**

In the 2009 Black Saturday fires, my brother lost his house at Kinglake. He and his partner and two young daughters only just escaped in time. I fear that unless we conserve and rebuild our forests; our bushlands and forests will suffer less frequent rain and become ever more fire prone. Currently where we are in Lilydale is classed as relatively low bushfire risk but I fear our risk increases each year that climate change is not addressed and Victoria's forests are pillaged. I also feel great frustration that Victoria's long term water security is at risk, and that this is not sufficiently prioritised.

**My response to term of reference: Consider all challenges and implications for bushfire preparedness arising from increasingly longer and more severe bushfire seasons as a result of climate change:**

Climate change must be addressed with every effective measure. No new fossil fuel projects can be approved, and existing mining and use must be phased out. We need governments everywhere to commit to the most ambitious mitigation strategies and targets, to have any chance of reducing warming to 1.5° or less.

Climate change leads to dryer, hotter weather patterns, greatly increasing the risk of catastrophic fires that lead to numerous deaths and devastating loss of habitat, fauna, property and livelihoods, such as those we saw across much of Australia earlier this year.

**My response to term of reference: In considering effectiveness of Victoria's operational response to the [2019-20](#) fire season, IGEM should particularly consider, "planning and response mechanisms to protect biodiversity threatened by bushfire":**

Over the coming decades we are rapidly running out of time and favourable weather to conserve, expand, replant and regrow our forests. I can't believe logging continues in Victoria's old growth forests when so much has already been lost, this really hurts my soul and erodes my hope for the kind of future my grandchildren face.

Ecologists have warned that Victoria's Mountain Ash forests are on the brink of ecological collapse, due to the loss of old growth trees and the stress of logging and bushfires. It's been clearly shown that forests affect weather patterns and bring rain; for the long term water security of Victoria, as well as addressing climate change we urgently need to conserve and restore our forests.

**My response to term of reference: Review of all opportunities and approaches to bushfire preparedness, including different methods of fuel and land management (for example 'cool burning', mechanical slashing, integrated forest management, traditional fire approaches) to protect life and property as well as ecological and cultural values:**

Due to the effects of climate change, it's becoming more and more difficult to manage fire risk with hazard of burns, as the number of days with suitable weather to conduct them becomes fewer each year over time. Bushfire hazard management needs to use the best methods possible for each situation (eg location, weather, biodiversity and cultural considerations). It's also clear from the experience of last summer that catastrophic bushfires are not contained by these methods, and forest ecology and climate change urgently and systematically need to be addressed, to mitigate global and local weather patterns.

**I would like to add the following:**

Please, just stop logging Victoria's native forests. Please take climate change seriously: treat it as the dire emergency it is.

**I would like to make the following recommendations:**

Yours sincerely,

Tamsin Kelly

Lilydale 3140