

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



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MAJOR EVENT REVIEW FOR VICTORIA'S FIRE IMPACTED FORESTS

A review to determine what actions are required now and into the future to protect, enjoy and use the state's forests is underway following an agreement between the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments.

The Major Event Review will assess the significant impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires and what remedial action needs to be taken to ensure our forests continue to be managed appropriately.

The Review is a new feature of the updated Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) which can be conducted jointly by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments when a significant environmental event, including a major bushfire, occurs.

Following last summer's bushfires and the signing of the modernised RFAs in March this year, the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments agreed to conduct a Major Event Review.

The Review is expected to take six months and will assess the impacts of the fires on forest biodiversity and forestry industries, as well as the wider economic, social and cultural impacts.

An independent panel will lead the Review which will be informed by scientific data and research, Traditional Owner knowledge, forest experts and communities.

The panel membership will include the Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, a Commonwealth nominated member agreed to by Victoria and a Traditional Owner member nominated by Victoria. The Victorian Government will shortly be seeking expressions of interest for the Traditional Owner candidate.

The Major Event Review will also provide an opportunity for wider public consultation when a summary report is released for public comment.

The 2019-20 fires were exceptional in size and impact burning approximately 1.5 million hectares across Victoria with around 1.3 million hectares or 18 per cent of Victoria's public native forest impacted.

The Review will support the continued delivery of the Victorian Forestry Plan which is phasing out native timber harvesting by 2030 and provides transitional measures towards a strong and sustainable plantation based industry.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio:

"This review will ensure the impacts of last summer's bushfires are properly assessed so we can make informed decisions about how our forests should be managed now and into the future."

"We want to see a Traditional Owner representative on the review panel to make sure their values and ecological knowledge are front of mind."

"This review will identify any changes that are needed in forest management into the future to further protect our precious natural environment as we move towards the end of native timber logging by 2030."

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