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I am making this submission as	Resident
Submission type	Personal
Organisation making the submission (if applicable)	
Your position in the organisation (if applicable)	
Consent to make submission public	Public
Your story	<p>I did not lose, or have damaged, my property in the 2019/2020 bushfires on the NSW far south coast. That was purely a matter of luck since I live close to bushland and have some bush on two boundaries of my 26 acres. Since I live in a low income I do not have the money to install sprinkler systems etc. Also I have severe osteoarthritis of hip, which makes physical activity such as raking of leaves, and removal of fall en tree branches etc impossible. And where would I remove fuel load to anyway? The concrete Bega Woolworths car park?</p> <p>However I was directly affected by increased anxiety especially on New years Eve when the sky was dark all day - this is so counter to human instinct that it induced great anxiety which led to evacuating first to Canberra and then to Melbourne. I was very lucky to have free accommodation for several weeks. Many people would not have that. I was also affected by having my small business, which is busiest in tourist season, virtually ruined by the bushfires.</p>

In this submission I want to focus on mitigation measures, not adaptation. For one thing, with evidence now emerging that air pollution has most likely led to higher death tolls from the coronavirus pandemic, I imagine how much more severely the virus would have affected all NSW residents had it occurred during the many weeks of smoke filled air from the bushfires. <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/air-pollution-increase-risk-covid-19/story?id=70067660>

Again - pure luck that this was not the case.

I have not yet tried to access any financial assistance for the loss of business as yet since others had much greater need.

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

Even without the coronavirus aspect, the need to address the causes of the bushfires, and not just adapt to their effects, is obvious. The 2019/2020 bushfire season was not, according to climate science, the "new normal", as has been suggested. Bushfire seasons are going to get longer and fires are going to be more severe from now on, unless climate change is addressed. This extremity of this bushfire season was due to the unprecedented dryness of the bush, due to the drought which was due to climate change. I do not expect to have to provide a reference for that statement. If the NSW government isn't already well aware of the predictions made by climate science with regard to bushfires, I am certain it can easily research the issue. The peer reviewed research is everywhere and easily accessible and should already be front and center of this enquiry's deliberations. The predictions from that science in terms of drought and fire are exactly what occurred.

Native forests are climate change mitigation of the first order. Forests sequester carbon, lower air temperature and create moisture. Logging forests does the opposite as Australia's leading forest ecologists and the location of some NSW bushfires demonstrate. <https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6582795/logging-makes-forest-fires-worse-experts/?cs=7>

Logging native forest is not even profitable according to past FNSW data (again the NSW government has that information). It is therefore clear that the economic value of native forests lies in leaving them alone. This is true from the view points of:

- a) reducing the enormous cost associated with fighting fires (I look forward to knowing exactly how much the bill for fire fighting came to this past season, but know the figure must be huge),
- b) provision of assistance for fire ravaged communities and individuals,
- c) loss of income for the tourism sector as people had to stay away from fore affected areas for many weeks, and will not visit for enjoyment of the natural environment since it is now burnt to a cinder.
- d) Their aforementioned role as climate change (and thus bushfire) mitigation.

The NSW government must immediately transition to 100% plantation timber and assist the burgeoning hemp industry (which can provide pulp and building materials such as fire proof hempcrete) in research and sustainable development.

The NSW government must also give up its associations with the fossil fuel industry in all its forms and shift the subsidies it has provided that sector, to the renewable energy sector, immediately.

The NSW government must also finally address the huge carbon footprint of industrial agriculture. I am not referring here, to the methane production of ruminant animals since this is offset to

some extent by the manure those animals produce which fertilizes soil and improves its carbon sequestration capacity through improved plant root growth. I am referring rather to the land clearing and consequent biodiversity loss, the huge amounts of fossil fuels used on large farms, the soil compaction (which has the opposite effect of animal manures) of heavy machinery, and the use of artificial fertilizers.

The NSW government must avail itself of the science, not only of climate change, economics and the social sciences, since all are interconnected, to invigorate the transition to a zero carbon society by 2030 and thereby to address the cause of bushfires: climate change. This will, in the longer term, be the most cost effective measure for dealing with bushfire.
<https://drawdown.org/the-book>

1.2 Preparation and planning

1.3 Response to bushfires

1.4 Any other matters

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