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## New Bushfire Research Released by the University of Tasmania

In an article on the Conversation on 6 January 2020 and republished by the ABC, David Bowman, Professor of Pyrogeography and Fire Science at the University of Tasmania tells us, that after 40 years of studying bushfires, his major break through in adaption to wildfire issues is to reschedule the Christmas – New Year holiday period to March or April.

This conclusion and other content in the article, by one of Australia's leading fire researchers, highlights why some fire research in Australia is not advancing the cause of bushfire mitigation. He states: " What's truly absurd is the business-as-usual approach....."

Instead of recognising the theoretical models used in the research do not appear to be based on the real world. Professor Bowman and his associates, continue to play down the value of fuel reduction burning. They promote the business as usual approach of forest management by neglect of the broader landscape. The result in drought years, is millions of hectares of forest and farmland being incinerated by wildfires in heavy fuel loads.

Professor Bowman says: " All of the indications are that we are galloping into changing fire regimes. We can certainly see that with what's occurred in the Australian alps (the snow country in south-eastern Australia, near Mount Kosciuszko). There were incredibly intense fires there [around the early 2000s](#) and now those areas are re-burning."

He is surprised that these areas are burning a mere 15 years after 60 percent of the Kosciuszko National Park was burnt in 2002-03, when normally he'd expect a gap of 50 or 100 years. This comment alone highlights that after 40 years of fire research he appears to have a very poor understanding of the rate of fuel build-up in forested environments.

The build-up of ground and shrub fuel loads in the years following high intensity bushfires, culminating with drought after 15 to twenty years, means the only certainty is, the area is set to burn by high intensity bushfires again. There appears to no comprehension that prior to the 1990s, burning by Ngarigo people, then graziers and then the Hume Snowy Bushfire Prevention Scheme managed fuel loads across the landscape, helping to reduce the number of large scale bushfires.

Professor Bowman's major scientific conclusion is: "And having the major holiday right in the middle of bushfire season also means that many people are denied a chance to experience national parks, as authorities close them off to reduce risk."

Who is going to visit a fire ravaged moonscape, regardless of what time of year the holiday is moved to? Does Professor Bowman understand that his business as usual fire modelling and let's adapt solution, is resulting in the slaughter of hundreds of millions of birds, mammals and reptiles every time there is a 'bad' fire season?

The question that must be asked by the government: Is the current crop of bushfire research scientists part of the problem or part of the solution?

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-06/bushfire-season-holidays-converge-goodbye-typical-summer/11843312>



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