



Level 12, 461 Bourke Street  
Melbourne Vic 3000  
GPO Box 191 Melbourne 3001  
**Telephone** (03) 9608 9500  
**Facsimile** (03) 9608 9566

[www.vicforests.com.au](http://www.vicforests.com.au)  
ABN 7684 6538 543

15 April 2020

Ms Christine Scuringa  
The Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO)  
"The Roadhouse"  
7203 Bonang Road  
GOONGERAH VIC 3888

**By email: [geco@geco.org.au](mailto:geco@geco.org.au)**



Dear Ms Scuringa

Thank you for your emails of 10 March and 6 April. I'm sorry for my delay in responding.

While the 2019/20 fires were extensive, they follow other significant fires in this state. The 2014 Management Standards and Procedures were informed by lessons learned through responses to previous large fires. VicForests will ensure these prescriptions are applied as a minimum standard.

VicForests is planning to recover timber in Timber Release Plan (TRP) coupes severely impacted by the fires where most of the standing trees have been killed. Harvesting of these areas will mean VicForests can minimise harvesting in unburnt areas while habitats recover.

We are planning to harvest at most 3500 hectares of the 1.5 million hectares of forest affected by the 2019/20 fires over the next few years which is 0.23 per cent of the overall area.

Our approach has been developed after considerable consultation with the Department of Land, Water and Planning including the Office of the Conservation Regulator (OCR). It specifically takes into account existing and emerging information about the impacts of the fires on threatened flora and fauna and will be updated as more information becomes available.

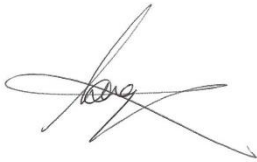
Harvest planning will include detailed assessment of any environmental values that persist in a specific coupe in the context of its immediate landscape. This involves developing management actions to prevent serious or irreversible harm to these values as required under the Code of Practice. Our approach also aligns with the key elements of the FSC Controlled Wood Standard.

We do not accept the published opinions of Professor David Lindenmayer as reflective of evidence and do not consider him to be an authority in these matters. We also do not agree that recovery harvesting impacts on large old trees and impairs the recruitment of new habitat. Our harvesting approach specifically focuses on the

retention and protection of current and future habitat trees even when they have been fire-affected, including all old growth stands and very old trees.

The fires, and now COVID-19, are having an enormous impact on the economy of Victoria. The careful implementation of recovery harvesting will enable us to continue to support employment and incomes at a time when many people have been deeply financially affected.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monique Dawson", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Monique Dawson**  
Chief Executive Officer