

# Public submission

AMANDA MIDLAM

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** *Attached overleaf*

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## INDEPENDENT FORESTRY PANEL SUBMISSION

By Amanda Midlam

On New Year's Eve in 2019, at the beginning of Black Summer, I was living in [REDACTED] on the Far South Coast of NSW. In that region we were prepared for a terrible fire season, or at least I thought we were but the reality was far worse than anything I had imagined. On that New Year's Eve I permanently lost my sense of safety when the mayor of Bega Valley Shire, Kristy McBain, announced there were not enough resources to go round and [REDACTED] would not be defended from fire.

She said the best chance of survival was to evacuate immediately.

I had had no idea that a whole town would be undefended. That was the first of my three evacuations. Each one was terrifying. [REDACTED] was under threat from the end of December through to the first week of March. Every road out was closed and the ring of fires was getting closer and closer. It was just a matter of which way the wind blew.

What made the fires so intense was the fact that the forests had been logged and were regrowth. This meant the canopy was the same height and fire roared through.

Forests need to be managed very differently from the way they are currently. I call for an end to logging of native forests and a shift to cool cultural burns.

There are many vital reasons to end the logging of native forests, in particular logging needs to stop to prevent the loss of habitat, but I urge you to consider that logging also needs to stop because climate change means we need to shift our relationship to the landscape and end practices that make our forests more susceptible to devastating fires.