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Monday, Feb 3rd 2020

Daily Mail

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- **274 scientists have written an open letter to Prime Minister Scott Morrison**
- **The letter demands the government reconsider its position on global warming**
- **The letter predicts extreme weather conditions will worsen in Australia**

By [BRITTANY CHAIN FOR DAILY MAIL AUSTRALIA](#) and [AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS](#)
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Hundreds of scientists have written an open letter to **Prime Minister** Scott Morrison

begging him to take action against **climate change**.

The letter, which has been signed by 274 climate experts, demands the government reconsider its position on global warming as the nation struggles through the worst bushfire season on record.

So far, 33 people have died in the horror infernos and millions of hectares of land has been destroyed.

'Scientists have been warning policy makers for decades that climate change would worsen Australia's fire risk, and yet those warnings have been ignored,' the letter read.



Prime Minister Scott Morrison speaks at a press conference at Parliament House in Canberra, Sunday, February 2, after scientists penned an open letter demanding climate action

The letter predicts extreme weather conditions will worsen should Australian leaders ignore the issue at hand.

'Science tells us these extreme events will only grow worse in the future without genuine concerted action to reduce global emissions of greenhouse gases.'

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Experts used the open letter to call on the Australian government to reduce emissions.

Australian National University climate scientist Professor Nerilie Abram said the letter is the product of despair as scientists witnessed the deadly fire season unfold.

They believe there is 'no strong, resilient Australia without deep cuts to greenhouse emissions' and hope the letter might silence climate deniers.

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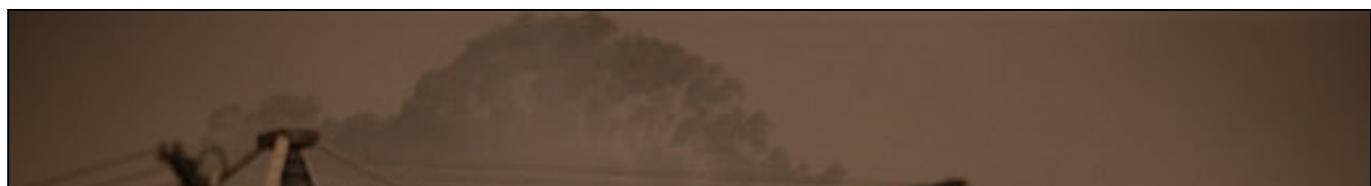
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Pictured: A bushfire in the Orroral Valley, south of Canberra in late January



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Clair Cowie defends her home from an out of control spot fire on February 01 in Canberra

'Australia has near-to the highest greenhouse gas emissions per person of any country. We need to pull our weight in reducing our emissions, and influence the rest of the world to take urgent and co-ordinated action. Any other policy is window dressing.'

Other predictions include Melbourne and Sydney experiencing 50C days by 2040.

2019 was the hottest and driest year on record in Australia at 1.5C above the climate average for the century.

Scientists fear for the environment when that average climbs to 3C above the average, which is predicted to happen within 80 years.

Seperately, Oxfam says the government must demonstrate it has fully grasped the lessons of this 'horrific' bushfire season.

Wildfires continue to rage near Sydney, Australia



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'The government's narrow-minded focus on adaptation and resilience simply, does not go far enough,' she said..

While Mr Morrison hasn't commented on the letter yet, he last week vowed to support hazard reduction burns.

Mr Morrison has also revealed the government was considering a way to name and shame states which don't complete required hazard reduction burns.



Two men stand in horror as they watch plumes of smoke and sky-high flames tower over Batlow

'Hazard reduction is as important as emissions reduction,' the prime minister told Sky News.

'Many would argue even more so, because it has a direct practical impact on the safety of a person going into a bushfire season.'

Mr Morrison flagged clear national standards for meeting hazard reduction targets, along with a review of land-clearing laws, native vegetation rules and allowing grazing in national parks.

'We report all the time on what our emissions reductions are, but across the country there is not a national system of reporting to track how hazard reduction is

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progressing,' he said.

'There's been plenty of chat around emissions reduction and that's fine, hazard reduction though is the thing that is going to take a more practical effect on how safe people are in future fire seasons.'

He said a proposed royal commission should look at how states were performing on reducing fire risks in the face of hotter, longer and drier summers.

2019/2020 FIRE SEASON DEATH TOLL

The national death toll in Australia's 2019/2020 bushfire season was 33 as of Monday, February 3, with 25 confirmed deaths in New South Wales, three in South Australia and five in Victoria.

OCTOBER

New South Wales:

Robert Lindsey, 77, and Gwen Hyde, 68, were found in their burned out Coongbar home near Casino on October 9th.

NOVEMBER

New South Wales:

The body of 85-year-old George Nole was found in a burnt out car near his home in Wyaliba, near Glen Innes.

Vivian Chaplain, a 69-year-old woman from Wyaliba, succumbed to her injuries in hospital after attempting in vain to save her home and animals from the blaze.

The body of 63-year-old Julie Fletcher was pulled from a scorched building in Johns River, north of Taree.

Barry Parsons, 58, was found in a shed at Willawarrin, near Kempsey.

Chris Savva, 64, died after his 4WD overturned near burnt-out South Arm bridge, near Nambucca Heads.

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A 59-year-old man was found sheltered in a Yarrowitch water tank on November 7. He died of injuries on December 29.

Victoria:

David Moresi, 69, died after being involved in a traffic incident while working at the at the Gelantipy fire in East Gippsland on November 30.

DECEMBER

New South Wales:

Firefighters Andrew O'Dwyer, 36, and Geoffrey Keaton, 32, died on December 19 after a tree fell on their truck while they were travelling through Buxton, south of Sydney.

Samuel McPaul, 28, was battling a blaze in Jingellic, in Green Valley, about 70km east of Albury on the border of NSW and Victoria, on December 30 when a 'fire tornado' caused his 10-tonne firetruck to roll.

South Australia:

The body of 69-year-old Ron Selth was found in his Charleston home, which was destroyed by the Cudlee Creek blaze on December 21.

NEW YEAR'S EVE FIRES

New South Wales:

Dairy farmer Patrick Salway, 29, and his father Robert, 63, died trying to save their property in Cobargo, near Bega, on December 31.

A 70-year-old man, named by local media as Laurie Andrew, was found dead outside a home at Yatte Yattah, west of Lake Conjola.

The body of a 70-year-old man was found in a burnt vehicle on a road off the Princes Highway at Yatte Yattah on the morning of New Year's Day.

The body of a 62-year-old man was found in a vehicle on Wandra Road at Sussex Inlet about 11.30am on New Year's Day.

A body, believed to be a 56-year-old man, found outside a home at Coolagolite, east of Cobargo on New Year's Day.

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An off-duty RFS firefighter, believed to be 72-year-old Colin Burns, was found near a car in Belowra after the New Year's Eve fires swept through.

Victoria:

Beloved great-grandfather Mick Roberts, 67, from Buchan, in East Gippsland, was found dead at his home on the morning of New Year's Day.

Fred Becker, 75, was the second person to die in Victoria. He suffered a heart attack while trying to defend his Maramingo Creek home.

JANUARY

New South Wales:

David Harrison, a 47-year-old man from Canberra, suffered a heart attack defending his friend's home near Batlow on Saturday, January 4.

A 71-year-old man was found on January 6. Police have been told the man was last sighted on December 31, 2019 and was moving equipment on his property in Nerrigundah.

An 84-year-old man who stayed to defend his home in Cobargo, NSW, dies in hospital three weeks after fire hit. His pet dog Bella, who stayed by his side as fires raged, was also killed in the disaster.

Three American firefighters are killed when Coulson Aviation C-130 Hercules water bomber Zeus crashed while fighting fires near Cooma on Thursday January 23. They have been named as Capt. Ian H. McBeth, 44, First Officer Paul Clyde Hudson and Flight Engineer Rick A. DeMorgan Jr, 43.

On January 24, Michael Clark, 59, was found in a Bodalla home destroyed by bushfires near the NSW South Coast town of Moruya.

Victoria:

Forest Fire Management firefighter Mat Kavanagh, 43, was killed Friday January 3 when he was involved in a two-car crash on the Goulburn Valley Highway.

Bill Slade, a 60-year-old father of two from Wonthaggi was fighting fires with Parks Victoria at Omeo when he died on January 11. He has been remembered as one of the longest serving, most experienced and fittest firefighters.

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South Australia:

Well-known outback pilot Dick Lang, 78, and his 43-year-old son, Adelaide surgeon Clayton Lang, died in the Kangaroo Island bushfire after their car was trapped by flames.

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