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| *Victoria’s bushfire emergency:*  *Biodiversity response and recovery version 2*  Report summary |
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## Context

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has undertaken desktop assessments, analysing data for thousands of species to understand the impact of the 2019/20 fires on Victoria’s biodiversity, highlighting species of immediate concern and identifying a range of potential actions that would benefit those species. This is compiled in the report *Victoria’s bushfire emergency: Biodiversity responses and recovery version 2*, which builds on the preliminary report in directing Victoria’s long-term plan for the recovery of biodiversity.

The updated report summarises the impacts of the Victorian bushfires as at 20 April 2020 and outlines a plan of action over different time frames to assist with biodiversity recovery. It continues to inform Government and other investors in allocating resources to secure the greatest overall benefit to biodiversity in the immediate term, whilst also thinking about the medium and long-term.

The report has been developed by DELWP Biodiversity Division in collaboration with other DELWP staff, agency partners, stakeholders, land managers and biodiversity experts. The report is intended to be a living document and will continue to be updated as the bushfire situation in Victoria changes and as more data and information becomes available.

## Changes since Version 1

* Updated spatial mapping to reflect final fire extent (as of 20th April), which increased by approximately 200,000 hectares to over 1.5 million hectares across the state.
* Key areas impacted since the last report include Cape Howe and Errinundra Plateau.

## Summary of impacts (as of 20 April 2020)

* The Victorian fires have burnt mostly in areas that have high biodiversity value.
* There are 244 species with more than 50 per cent of their modelled habitat within the burnt area, including 215 Victorian rare or threatened species. ​This includes four species listed under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*
* The fire extent impacted at least 60 per cent of over 75 National parks and nature conservation reserves in Victoria.
* 78 per cent of the Warm Temperate Rainforest is within the fire extent.
* The majority of the distribution of seven vegetation communities listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act) are also within the burnt area.
* A significant area of habitat across Victoria has now burnt multiple times since 2000. This can result in regeneration failure for Alpine Ash.
* Species and vegetation communities of most immediate concern include the Long-footed Potoroo, Ground Parrot, Glossy Black-cockatoo, Large Brown Tree Frog, Diamond Python, Freshwater Galaxiids, Colquhoun Grevillea, Betka Bottlebrush and Warm Temperate Rainforest.
* Some species, such as the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby and the Guthega Skink, were not as impacted as first predicted, as the fire did not reach key populations. Other species appear to be showing some resilience to the fires, such as Yellow-bellied Water Skink.

## Response and recovery actions

In collaboration with partners, DELWP has developed a long-term plan to help biodiversity recover following the Victorian bushfires. The plan builds on initial priority actions across a range of themes for recovery of fire impacted species and vegetation communities.

Shifting the focus from immediate actions, version 2 of this report assesses further action required in the medium- and longer-term to support fire affected species.

* Intensified and sustained management of threats (e.g. control of invasive herbivores such as goats, deer, horses and rabbits, and control of feral predators such as foxes and cats).
* Maximising the long-term resilience of key populations (e.g. through translocations and captive breeding, protecting and managing key areas outside the fire extent).
* Enhancing Traditional Owner connection to Country through actions to reset and heal Country.
* Improving our preparedness and identifying priority options across Victorian landscapes to reduce the risks to biodiversity in the event of future fires.

## Development of the report

### How was the report developed?

The report was developed using a range of methods, including a desktop analysis to assess the impact of the current bushfire extent on over 4400 species, as well as consultation with key agencies and species experts. The focus and scope are guided by the principles and priorities set by initial Biodiversity Bushfire Response Workshops held in January 2020, while integrating new information obtained since.

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**When will the report be updated?**

The report will continue to be updated as more information becomes available. Updates to the report will be made as we continue learn more about the impact of the fire from severity mapping and on-ground assessments. DELWP will continue to seek input from our key partners and species experts guide our understanding and actions to promote recovery and resilience to this and future fire events.

## Supporting Victoria’s fire-affected biodiversity

As we learn more about the extent and impact of the fires, the collective actions of all Victorians to assist in the recovery of our wildlife and habitats will be guided by the report and response plan.

We encourage land managers, partners and community groups alike to refer to the report and plan associated actions as we work together to ensure Victoria’s biodiversity is healthy, valued and actively cared for in line with [Protecting Victoria’s Environment – Biodiversity 2037.](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/biodiversity-plan)

## How you can help

Learn more about how you can [act for nature](https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/media-releases/7-ways-you-can-help-nature-recover-from-the-bushfires) after fires and ensure Victoria’s biodiversity is healthy, valued and actively cared for in line with [Protecting Victoria’s Environment – Biodiversity 2037](https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/biodiversity-plan?_ga=2.76544406.225437562.1597295282-1043161647.1594776369).

**Further Information**

To stay up to date on the latest recovery actions and view the updated report, *Victoria’s bushfire emergency: Biodiversity response and recovery* please visit: <http://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/home/biodiversity-bushfire-response-and-recovery>