

Early Career Fellowship: Guiding Law Reform for Australia's fiery future

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I am grateful to live and work on the land of the Muwinina people of Luruwita, and the Kurna people of the Adelaide hills and plains. I acknowledge Country and the Elders that have listened to, loved and cared for her, including with law and fire, since forever.

Building a global network to inform *great* fire laws, here in Australia

NHRA is supporting me to maximise the value of my research on fire law and policy reform, including to NHRA's end-users and stakeholders. We will showcase great examples – from Australia and overseas – of laws, in operation, that are helping agencies, communities and environments to adapt to future fire regimes.

The Fellowship priorities

This early career fellowship has two key priorities.

Priority 1: Showcasing great examples

What would the law look like if it was helping us to adapt?

There is currently no research institute or repository providing detailed information about cutting-edge fire law and policy research. There is also no public collection reporting on the multitude of practical legal and policy reforms that are already being implemented around the world to improve the flexibility and adaptiveness of fire-related laws, to enhance our capacity to live with fire.

The first priority for this fellowship is to design and launch a new, easily accessible and engaging website. The website will present research insights from my Australian Research Council project about adaptation-oriented bushfire prevention, preparation, response and recovery laws. This new website will also showcase examples of 'bright spots', that is, practical examples of laws and policies that are facilitating fire adaptation in Australia and elsewhere in the world.

Priority 2: Sharing insights globally

Learning from others around the world that are thinking about this

The second priority for this fellowship is to establish a new Global Wildfire Law & Policy Network. The Network will bring together leading fire law and policy scholars. We will work together to build the new, online collection (Priority 1), and to highlight innovative legal tools, principles and approaches to adapting to future fire regimes. The Network will enhance our capacity to learn from each other and facilitate more rapid adaption to future fires.



Background

Since the 2019–20 bushfires, reports such as the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements (2020) and state equivalents have recommended that Australian governments review their laws and policies to address barriers to reducing fire hazards.

These recommendations echo past inquiries that urged governments to reduce regulatory complexity and improve hazard reduction. Australian governments have also signed a National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) to share costs to 'proactively reduce the risk and limit the impact of disasters ...on Australian communities and economies' (NPDRR 2020, cl 11), a priority requiring legal reform. Despite broad consensus about the need to improve laws to adapt to future fires, scientific scholarship about mitigating fire risks is not yet being effectively implemented in law. This demonstrates a serious, science-to-law translation challenge.

My research aims to help overcome that translation challenge.



Further information

For additional information scan the QR code or contact:

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