

## Vic Forests fires back at ACF

**VicForests, the Victorian Government's forestry enterprise, has responded to the Australian Conservation Foundation's recent 'Woodchipping our Water' commissioned report (*Ecos* August–September news item, p7) saying the claims about water yield and carbon impacts from forestry practice in the Goulburn Broken catchment lacked scientific rigour and contained oversights.**

Representative Forest Scientist, Michael Ryan, wrote that VicForests harvests just 0.02 per cent of the catchment's 2.4 million hectares each year – predominately 1939 fires regrowth, or salvage logging. The 'harvest and haulage' generates an estimated \$34 million per year. He claims that ACF's estimate of \$12 million needed for industry transition falls short.

Mr Ryan said that modelling of additional water availability and carbon storage if logging ceased was perverse and ignored the water uptake impact of regrowth after recent catchment-scale fires.

'A forest cannot sequester more carbon while using less water. Regrowth forests are far more efficient at withdrawing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and converting it into wood than older forests but this comes at a cost in terms of increased water usage.'

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