

WORLD PRESS PHOTO
Australian Bushfires



“At 4 a.m. on Christmas Eve, a single lightning bolt ignited the most destructive bushfires in Australia’s history. Within days, more than 100 fires, burning out of control near Sydney, forced the evacuation of 3,000 people. Arson was suspected, as new fires broke out, testing the efforts of 10,000 fire fighters battling the flames. Hot, dry and windy weather combined to fuel the bush fields, producing the worst conditions possible.”

Dean Sewell

Australia, Oculi Photos for Sydney Morning Herald

This fire burnt out miles and miles of bush and devastated large amounts of land. After it, erosion and desertification of the ground began. Australia being a very hot country where great droughts occur, this fire comes to aggravate more the situation, as plants help to sustain the water in the ground, without them, its very probable that the desertification of the ground happens. Another great consequence is the release of many tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere. Nowadays we speak a lot about the

greenhouse effect and global warming. This fire comes to aggravate the situation, even so very little in relation to the remaining portion of the pollution, but it is plus an aid.

This fire caused the evacuation of thousands of people and the destruction of several human facilities including houses. The great majority of structures in Australia are comprised of wood and will create a huge demand for the need of new materials to reconstruct them. This will provoke the cut down of many trees and resources from the land. In consequence, the few existing trees will be less and therefore it will be very difficult to prevent the erosion of the ground.

If the arson is true, I think this issue will reflect negative dimensions to the environment, but that is not all, because the cause of that shows that humans are one of the problems to the environment, since human beings are polluting the planet.

It's very impressive how it can be possible that a human being can start a fire and then he can't stop it. Because the hot, dry and windy weather demonstrates that humans are incapable of stopping what they create.

Pedro Pinto

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