

May – August 2021

Impact Report

Australia and New Zealand

THE CONVERSATION

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Real-world impact

As a not-for-profit publisher, we're driven by more than numbers of readers. We aim to inform public debate with knowledge-based journalism that is responsible, ethical and supported by evidence. Producers and journalists use The Conversation as a valuable resource to find experts who can provide evidence-based commentary. And it's not just media that contact our authors, but politicians, policy-makers and industry groups too. Our collaboration with academics helps them achieve real-world change.

Frogs are in danger – we are now a bit closer to finding out why

Many Australian frogs are at the risk of extinction. In July, Jodi Rowley (Australian Museum UNSW) and Karrie Rose (Taronga Conservation Society Australia, University of Sydney) put out a cry for information about dead, shrivelled frogs which were unexpectedly turning up across eastern Australia. The article was read 151 thousand times and republished by media outlets around the world including the ABC and Australian Geographic. The Threatened Species Commissioner tweeted:



@TSCCommissioner
@TSCCommissioner

Frogs are an integral part of healthy Australian ecosystems. Recent reports around sick & dead frogs across eastern Australia are concerning. Multiple agencies & orgs are working together to investigate the event and determine the likely cause. More: bit.ly/3igycqw



Australian Museum

The authors received more than 1200 reports of dead and dying frogs and learned a lot more about the scale of the event. They also received help from vets far and wide to obtain diagnostic samples to try to establish a diagnosis. Another article about at-risk Australian frogs in August received international attention. The BBC interviewed Graeme Gillespie (University of Melbourne) for a feature video story they're preparing about the study, and the article was translated and featured in Spanish, French and Japanese media.

Analysis prompts recommendation for law changes

In a 2018 article, Lorraine Finlay (Murdoch University) discussed whether there are disqualification provisions that might affect any dual citizens sitting in state parliaments. As a result of her analysis, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges in the WA Parliament self-initiated an inquiry into the issue and recommended that constitutional amendments be introduced in WA to clarify the eligibility of Members of Parliament with dual citizenship to remain in Parliament.

Researchers highlight the dangers to Australian farmers of trading soil carbon credits

In June, we published [an article by Aaron Simmons \(UNE\) and colleagues](#) exploring one of the problems raised by the sale of carbon credits offshore. When farmers change their practices so soils store more carbon from the atmosphere they can earn soil carbon credits to be sold in emissions trading markets. In one high-profile deal in January, an Australian farm owned by the Macdoch Group sold soil carbon credits to Microsoft via a US-based carbon offset platform Regen Network. The authors' research showed that inaccurate methods led to the carbon increase being overestimated which in turn led to excess carbon credits being awarded. A full response from Regen Network was linked to the article. A number of other researchers emailed to thank the authors for the article stating they were similarly concerned. One of the highest-profile climate change researchers in the world, Professor Peter Smith, picked up the article and sent it to his contacts in Microsoft. The GHG Policy Institute who did an analysis for Microsoft prior to the purchase of the carbon credits also took the article to Microsoft. The authors have been informed that the Macdoch Group won't be using Regen Network for their next trades. Constructive engagement between the authors and Regen Network continued after publication of the piece.

Our articles shape politics and policy

Former Prime Ministers of Australia and other political pundits pay attention to articles in The Conversation. PM Malcolm Turnbull and Norman Ornstein, an emeritus scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and a contributing editor for the Atlantic tweeted [a July article](#)

by [Lesley Russell](#) (University of Sydney) which explained how Australians are paying companies millions to roll out COVID vaccines.



After William Bowtell (UNSW) wrote [Morrison's 'new deal' for a return to post-COVID normal is not the deal most Australians want](#) former PM Kevin Rudd tweeted:



Our climate coverage ensures evidence-based information reaches the widest possible audience to inform public debate

The Conversation a global knowledge project, with staff based in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK, US, Africa, Indonesia, France and Spain. Our articles are extremely influential at keeping evidence-based information in the news cycle across the globe. For example, in April, The Conversation UK published a warning to climate scientists that the concept of net zero is a dangerous trap. The article reached 252 thousand reads and was republished by IFLScience and countless other media outlets.

In August, the NZ National Commission for UNESCO republished our article by Meg Parsons (University of Auckland) and Lara Taylor (Māori Researcher, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research) highlighting the importance of Indigenous knowledge on how we govern the world's oceans. It was republished on their new oceans science website Te Tini a Tangaroa, which aims to connect New Zealanders and international audiences with the breadth and depth of NZ ocean science and to showcase the importance of indigenous knowledges in ocean science.

Reporting informs best practice in education

We regularly publish articles on the newest research on best practice in education which are then taken up by industry. Following articles in The Conversation, Brett Healey (Curtin University) was invited to present a webinar for the Primary English Teachers Association Australia (PETAA) on grammar and creative writing. Modern Languages Teachers Association Tasmania shared University of Tasmania's Mairin Hennebry-Leung's article on



studying a second language with politicians as part of a languages campaign. Helen Joanne Adam (Edith Cowan University) wrote tips to make school bookshelves more diverse and Story Box Library audited their library: “Auditing our library helped us to see where the gaps continue to lie in culturally diverse representation in children’s literature, including access for educators and libraries, but most importantly, young and impressionable students.” Helen was also invited to join the Book Review Panel for Dolly Parton Imagination Library Australia.

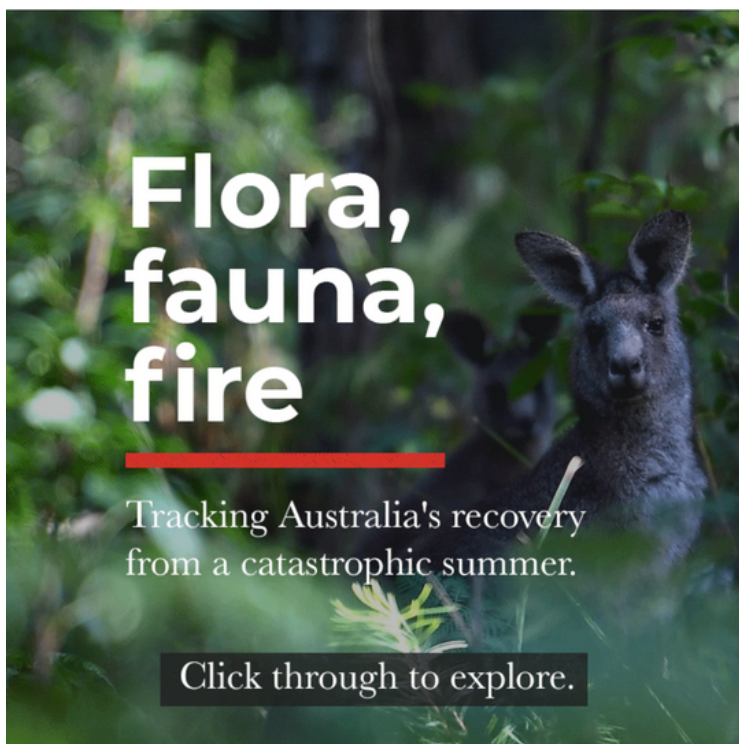
Recognition for our work

The Conversation's environmental series [Flora, fauna, fire: Tracking Australia's recovery from a catastrophic summer](#) is a finalist for the Australian Museum Eureka Prize for Science Journalism.

[Flora, fauna, fire](#) launched six months after the Black Summer bushfires. Editors from The Conversation teamed with leading scientists to show how Australia's plants and animals were faring after the tragedy. Through words, photos, maps and interactive graphics, the project tells of adrenaline-fuelled wildlife rescues, ingenious conservation efforts and wild places returning to life.

The series also won the Universities Australia Higher Education Media Award at the National Press Club.

You can watch our editors talking about the series [here](#).



The Conversation AU/NZ by numbers

13,920,000	Page views on The Conversation AU / NZ platform per month on average	UP 10%	vs May-Aug 2020
79,230,000	Page views including republication via ABC, Flipboard and other media outlets around the globe per month on average	UP 6%	vs May-Aug 2020
8,919,000	Users on The Conversation AU / NZ platform plus Apple News per month on average	UP 11%	vs May-Aug 2020
170,400	Newsletter subscribers	UP 3.5%	since April 2021
189,000	Twitter followers		
337,600	Facebook followers	UP 2.8%	since April 2021
45,500	Instagram followers		
2000	Additional donors		since April 2021
118	Donations of \$500 or more		since April 2021

For more information, please contact:

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