

Australian Bushfires

Mr GUYULA (Nhulunbuy): Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my condolences to all those people who have been affected by the bushfire. We are seeing the effects of climate change and we need to respond to these problems. Seasonal burnoff is also important, and I would like to come back to the area where I live in Arnhem Land, where I am during the Christmas period. It was that hot—just the climate itself. The waterholes were drying up, everything was drying up and in the mighty Arafura swamp, the first time—went right into the heart, and started burning. Someone started hunting something, but it burnt deep into the swamp itself.

I drove off to Gove from Millingimbi and in a week-and-a-half, I came back and the fire was still burning. It was not moving, it was going deep inside, burning into the ground. That is how dry the climate was, it was very hot that day.

Along the top coming to Darwin from Ramingining, I got a comment that in a waterhole in one of the outstations, 100 buffalos died—just without water. Along the road toward Maningrida I saw some dead buffalos. With the climate being very hot, it is a trigger that helps start bushfires. It was really sad. Today, we send our condolences to the people who have been affected by fire down there, because I can feel what that is like, with just walking around and seeing the climate itself killing nature and animals and drying up water. With the fires down south, you can imagine it is really a hard time, especially for firefighters and the people who wanted support.

We send our thanks to those who spent their time saving country, wildlife and homes. Now that country needs time to heal as do the people around Australia, especially those down south who have been affected.

There will be a deep grieving for much time. My sympathies are also with the Aboriginal nations for that country as well as all who call that country their home and felt the full effects of the fires. Our thoughts are with you at this time.

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