



Environmentalist Bob Brown says Forestry Tasmania's regeneration burns have left iconic Cradle Mountain and Dove Lake swathed in smoke. Picture: FACEBOOK

[Tasmania](#)

## **Former Australian Greens leader Bob Brown calls for ban on autumn Forestry burns**

EMMA HOPE and DAVID KILLICK, Mercury  
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PARTS of Tasmania have recorded worse air pollution readings than London and Los Angeles as autumn regeneration, hazard reduction and private burn-offs blanketed parts of the state in thick haze during the past 48 hours.

While the smoke made for spectacular sunrises and sunsets, data from the Environment Protection Authority automatic monitoring stations showed significant peaks in several centres.

According to data aggregated on the website World Air Quality Index, the levels of fine particulate matter in the air exceeded that in some of the world's most densely populated cities.

In New Norfolk, the air quality index for particulate matter 10 micrometers or less in diameter, known as PM10, peaked at 117 in the 48 hours to 4pm yesterday, while in Huonville the index reached 52.

By comparison, central Melbourne's air quality index figures for PM10 peaked at 52 in the same period, Central London's peaked at 42 and Los Angeles' peaked at 51.

Calls to the EPA for comment by the *Mercury* were not returned yesterday.



Regeneration Burn North-West Tasmania, Sisters Hills from Table Cape. Picture: CHRIS KIDD

The burns in Tasmania's North-West were labelled an "economic disaster" for tourism by environmentalist Bob Brown.

The former Australian Greens leader said tourist drawcards including Cradle Mountain and Dove Lake were shrouded in smoke.

"With shuttle bus operations and car parks packed at the height of the season for visitors to see deciduous beech forest, the picturesque autumn scene is filled with manufactured smoke. It's outrageous," Dr Brown said.

"These forest-destroying burns should be banned. They not only aggravate climate change, threatening the Tasmanian wilderness, but they are destroying hundreds of visitors' appreciation of some of the most delightful wild panoramas on Earth."

Forestry minister Peter Gutwein said Dr Brown's comments were disappointing.

“No one should be surprised that Bob Brown wants to shut down the forestry industry. We’ve heard it all before,” Mr Gutwein said. “ Dr Brown should have a chat to Environment Tasmania about the fact that they clearly believe in the value of regeneration burns.”

Regeneration and fuel reduction burns caused smoke hazards around the state but a burn at South Hobart was cancelled yesterday because of the weather conditions.

In the past few days forest regeneration burns have been completed to the northwest of Judbury in the Huon, and on the North-West Coast in the west and southeast of Trowutta, around Edith Creek, southwest of Wynyard and southwest of Smithton.

Asthma Foundation of Tasmania general manager Wendy Evans warned if people could smell smoke, it was a risk to their health and they should take the necessary precautions.

Those affected should stay indoors and keep windows and doors closed, she said.

The foundation offers regular smoke warnings for Tasmania. [To find out more, click here.](#)  
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Regeneration Burn North West Tasmania, looking through Fossil Bluff at Wynyard towards St Valentines Peak. Picture: CHRIS KIDD