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Bush technology to help world's poorest tackle climate change

New research by scientists from The Nature Conservancy has demonstrated how the deployment of Australia's well-governed savanna fire management practices could be used around the world to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fight climate change.

"We've quantified the extraordinary opportunity for countries across the world with tropical savannas, like ours, to fight climate change," said Dr Geoff Lipsett-Moore, Climate Scientist at The Nature Conservancy and lead author of the study. "And, importantly, it can all be done while protecting biodiversity and improving economic opportunities for Indigenous land managers."

Each year around the world, savanna fires produce significant emissions but if managed effectively and in a manner more like the way savannas have been managed by Indigenous peoples for thousands of years, they can provide an important greenhouse gas emissions mitigation opportunity.

"In total we found opportunities to mitigate 89.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (MtCO₂-e) which is comparable to installing 150 million solar panels. We found the potential is particularly high in African Least Developed Countries with mitigation of up to two thirds of that (60.2 MtCO₂-e) possible per year¹," said Dr Lipsett-Moore. "Our research quantifies the global opportunities for emissions reductions through early dry season burning across 37 countries including 29 countries in Africa, six countries in South America plus Australia and Papua New Guinea.

"More than a million square kilometres of savanna-dominated protected areas in Africa could be used as pilot sites to test and advance a regional approach to mitigation efforts for savanna fires." That's an area about the size of NSW and Victoria combined!

"There's huge potential here for using what we've tried and documented in Australia to reduce greenhouse gas emissions cost effectively around the world," concluded Dr Lipsett-Moore.

The team's research paper can be viewed at this link - <https://rdcu.be/UEHv>

Dr Geoff Lipsett-Moore is available for interview.

How can burning be good for climate change?

Fire is a natural part of tropical and subtropical savannas all across the world, however large hot fires in late dry seasons account for 70% of emissions from savanna fires. By shifting patterns of burning to the early dry season when fires are less intense and less extensive, hot late dry season wildfires can be reduced. The net result of this shift in burning is a measurable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions – a reduction that corporations and governments are willing to pay for to fight climate change.

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organisation dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we focus on getting things done efficiently and with the greatest positive impact for conservation. We're a trusted organisation working in 72 countries on innovative solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We're tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at unprecedented scale, providing food and water sustainably and helping make cities more sustainable. To learn more about The Nature Conservancy in Australia, visit our [website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#).

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¹ Emissions reduction estimates in the study were based on the successful approach developed in Australia to reduce emissions from savanna fires using global-scale, remotely-sensed estimates of monthly emissions.