

Fire: Friend or Foe?

Mass media report mostly on:



Current fires and past major fires in a natural-urban interface



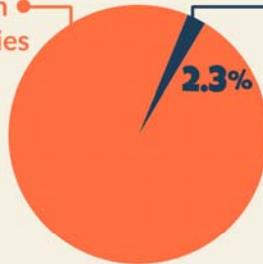
Media messages focus on fire suppression and the negative impact of fire (i.e. fire as a foe)



The actors informing the fire narrative in the media

Journalists consulting with actors within various capacities

53.6 %	SANParks
44.0 %	Fire victims
34.1 %	Fire suppressors
26.0 %	Other groups public, municipalities, volunteers, 'Friend' groups etc.



Scientists

Scientists do not have a very visible footprint in the media discourse. However, for the media stories that they do get involved with, a more *nuanced perspective* is evident i.e. fire is a friend and a foe.

Informing the narrative

Scientists must **engage** more with media on fire topics. If not, biased media reporting will continue to influence what the public (and policymakers) hear, possibly resulting in inappropriate responses to fire and pre-emptive fire management.

The science message

Instead of focussing on fire suppression, scientists also consider topics such as **pro-active fire risk-reduction** and impart various **fire ecology principles** that are important for understanding and managing fire and fire risk (i.e. fuel loads, fire regimes, benefits of fire).

What sentiment is portrayed towards fire in the media?

Scientists involved



when
← →

No scientists involved



Only negative
Negative and positive
Only positive