

## **MAHUIKA IMPACT EVENT: SOURCE OF LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE?**

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### **Introduction**

The oral histories of Australian aborigines contain descriptions of a huge fireball, which passed over southeastern Australia. Australian researchers have identified tsunami deposits from this event which have been dated via C-14 at  $1500 \pm 30$  AD. The recent geological record of Eastern Australia also contains evidence of catastrophic rainfall and flooding and dramatic coastal erosion, as well as boulder piles deposited by mega-tsunamis. At roughly the same time,  $\sim 1500$  AD, there was widespread burning in New Zealand[1]. Between 1480 and 1500, New Zealand experienced eruptions on two out of twelve of its active volcanoes. New Zealand tree ring records also show a pronounced cooling event just prior to 1500 AD. The cooling event, the eruptions, and the widespread burning may have been caused by the same impact, which produced the Eastern Australian tsunami deposits. Alternatively, the volcanic eruptions were not impact related but did produce the local cooling event.