



Impact of climate change on the coast

Federal parliamentary committee hears from coastal representatives in Darwin

The projected impact of climate change on coastal areas will be on the agenda of a series of public hearings in Darwin over 18-20 August, held by the House of Representatives Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts Committee as part of its inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on Australia's coastal zone.

As part of the public hearings, the Committee will hold roundtable discussions with participants from the Coast to the Coast Conference 2008, being held in Darwin that week.

"This major conference offers an important opportunity for the Committee to draw on the expert knowledge of those attending," Committee Chair Ms George said.

"In the roundtable discussions, Members will be asking for suggestions on improving governance arrangements for the coastal zone and on strategies to deal with climate change adaptation, particularly as a result of projected sea level rise."

The Committee will hold a further roundtable discussion with representatives from local councils, universities, peak bodies and environmental networks across Darwin. The Committee will also hear from the Northern Land Council and the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

"Indigenous people have an important role to play in the management of sea country, and this is a matter of great interest to the Committee in the context of the inquiry," Ms George said.

Other organisations appearing before the Committee include Surf Life Saving Australia, Birds Australia and the Gippsland Coastal Board, which was recently part of a landmark legal decision in Victoria relating to climate change and coastal planning and development. Members of the public will also be able to have their say on coastal management issues during a community statements session at the hearings.

The public hearing schedule is as follows:

Monday, 18 August 2008 - Litchfield Room, Parliament House, Mitchell Street, State Square, Darwin

10.15 am Birds Australia
11.00 am Northern Land Council
3.00 pm Roundtable with representatives from NT organisations

Tuesday, 19 August 2008 - Waterfront 3, Darwin Convention Centre, Stokes Hill Road, Darwin

11.45 am Gippsland Coastal Board
12.30 pm Surf Life Saving Australia
2.30 pm Roundtable and open forum with participants from the Coast to Coast conference
4.00 pm Roundtable and open forum with participants from the Coast to Coast conference

Wednesday, 20 August 2008 - Litchfield Room, Parliament House, Mitchell Street, State Square, Darwin

10.45 am Private individual
11.15 am Local Government Association NT
11.45 am Torres Strait Regional Authority
12.30 pm Community statements

Further details on the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ccwea>.

For **media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Jennie George MP, on 0418 784 455 (mobile) or 02 6277 4260 (Canberra) or 02 4262 6122 (electorate office)

For **background information**, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or by email at ccwea.reps@aph.gov.au.