



Supplementary Information for the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts Inquiry into climate change and environmental impacts on coastal communities

The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) provides the following information in response to Committee's request for further information at their public hearing on 28 November 2008.

Is your Department involved in planning for the conference that will involve local government agencies on adaptation to climate change in the new year? (page 5 of Hansard)

The DEWHA is aware of the conference and will assist the lead agency the Department of Climate Change (DCC) where required.

Advise the committee about the level of cooperation on coastal and climate change issues (and achieving of a national policy for the coastal zone) between the two departments (DEWHA and DCC)? (page 13 of Hansard)

DEWHA and DCC work closely on issues relating to climate change policy and program matters and the environment. Since the creation of DCC there has and continues to be a very high degree of cooperation in addressing the impacts of climate change on Australia's coastline and surrounding environs. The Departments work in partnership to develop Australian Government policy positions and program approaches on climate change and the coastal zone, including matters to be considered by COAG and other Ministerial Councils as appropriate. In addition to frequent meetings, workshops and liaison between Departments, DEWHA has established a Portfolio wide reference group to support development of adaptation policies and programs with counterparts at DCC.

At present DCC does not formally participate in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) Ministerial Council and its subordinate groups including NRM Standing Committee, Marine and Coastal Committee and Intergovernmental Coastal Advisory Group. Development of a National Coastal Policy is not specifically on the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Working Group on Climate Change and Water agenda.