



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage

**MEDIA ALERT**

Issued: 6 September 2007

Chair: Mal Washer MP

Deputy Chair: Jennie George MP

# Advancing sustainability

- Sustainability charter report tabled today -

The House Environment Committee tabled its report ***Sustainability for survival: creating a climate for change*** yesterday, recommending the establishment of a national Sustainability Commissioner, Commission and Charter. The report argues that strong Australian Government leadership is required to advance sustainability.

The *Sustainability for survival* report examines issues surrounding the national governance framework for sustainability previously proposed by the Committee in its *Sustainable Cities* report (released August 2005).

Committee Chair, Dr Mal Washer MP, said "This report makes concrete recommendations concerning the role of the Sustainability Commission and Commissioner and the nature of the Charter." He said the Charter needs to be aspirational to reach every day Australians, but measurable targets linked to the Charter are also required to drive action, particularly among governments and industry.

The report's recommendations:

- restate the need for a national Sustainability Commission headed by a Sustainability Commissioner, and the creation of a Sustainability Charter
- call for the use of a combination of aspirational statements and measurable targets to advance sustainability outcomes
- propose inclusion in the Charter of the following topics: built environment, water, energy, transport, ecological footprint, economics, waste, social equity and health and community engagement and education
- reiterate the need for Australian Government leadership in advancing sustainability outcomes through means such as monetary and non-monetary incentives for governments, industry and the community; and by assessing existing and future policy against the proposed Sustainability Charter.

The Chair concedes that the recommended changes for sustainability come with financial cost, but the cost of inaction is perceived to be far greater.

For **media comment**, contact: Dr Mal Washer, House Environment Committee Chair, on (08) 9300 2244.

The report is available on the Committee's website:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/environ/charter/index.htm>, or from the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or [environment.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:environment.reps@aph.gov.au)

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