

SUBMISSION NO 18



**INDUSTRY
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Mr Ian Dundas
Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Dundas

Inquiry into Employment in the Environment Sector

I refer to my letter of 31 July 2002 indicating that the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources would make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage Inquiry into Employment in the Environment Sector. The Department's submission is as follows.

In September 2001 the Commonwealth Government and representatives of the Australian environment industry agreed on, and released, an Environment Industry Action Agenda. The Action Agenda is a ten-year strategy, which sets out 18 key recommendations to enable the Australian environment industry to achieve its vision "to add value to all Australian business by enabling competitive outcomes, and in the process build an environment industry with annual sales exceeding \$40 billion by 2011".

A Leaders Group made up of environment industry CEOs, in partnership with a joint team from the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and Environment Australia, guided the development of the Action Agenda. The development phase was preceded by the release of a discussion paper, 'Investing in Sustainability', which provided an overview of the environment industry and issues affecting the industry. A copy of the Environment Industry Action Agenda, the Action Agenda Executive Summary and the discussion paper are attached for your consideration.

The Department considers this Action Agenda material to be relevant to the terms of reference of the Inquiry because:

- a) the discussion paper provides some information on employment in the environment sector; and
- b) the Action Agenda outlines a vision for considerable growth in the revenues of the environment sector over the next 10 years which, if realised, could be expected to result in a significant increase in employment in that sector.

The discussion paper includes information regarding employment resulting from environment protection expenditure in Australia. The data was sourced from a publication entitled 'Environmental Sciences Research and Development - Market Analysis', published in June 1998

by the Department and which included analysis done by the National Institute of Economic Research (NIEIR). A copy of this publication is also attached for your information.

I understand that a subsequent publication, the *National Capability Statement on Australia's Environment Industry*, prepared for Environment Australia by the Victorian University of Technology, provides more up-to-date information on the environment industry in Australia.

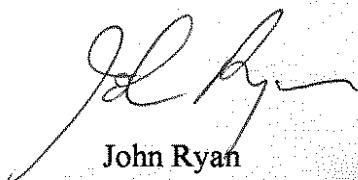
The Committee might note that the lack of adequate information on the Australian environment industry is a matter of concern to both the Government and the environment industry and is the subject of a recommendation in the Action Agenda. The available data tends to be disjointed and to represent only parts of the industry. Industry representatives have called for more consistent and comprehensive data for the whole of the Australian environment industry. To this end, the Minister for Industry, Tourism and Resources and the Minister for Environment and Heritage have recently written to the Australian Statistician asking that the amount and level of statistical information available from the ABS on the environment industry be improved.

The Environment Industry Action Agenda is now in the implementation phase. A group of industry leaders has been formed, called the Barton Group, to guide and monitor the implementation of the Action Agenda. The environment industry, with input from my Department, Environment Australia and all relevant Federal, State and Territory government bodies, are currently preparing a detailed report on the first year's progress in implementing the Action Agenda. I expect this report to be completed in October 2002.

If you require any further information please contact Mr Rick Belt, Manager, Environmental Industries Section, Energy and Environment Division, telephone (02) 6213 7208 and e-mail Rick.Belt@industry.gov.au.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours sincerely



John Ryan
Deputy Secretary

30 August 2002