

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.1 The committee recommends that the Australian Government expedite its review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth), as required under section 522A of that Act, by bringing it forward to 2018.

Recommendation 2

2.2 The committee recommends that the 'water trigger' be removed from the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

Recommendation 3

2.3 The committee recommends that uranium mining not be included as part of the 'nuclear actions' matter of national environmental significance in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

Recommendation 4

2.4 The committee recommends that the Australian, state and territory governments re-commit to the One Stop Shop initiative.

Recommendation 5

2.5 In the context of a One Stop Shop approach, the committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate ways in which environmental assessment and approval processes could be consolidated into the remit of a single regulator.

Recommendation 6

2.6 The committee recommends that, if not already implemented, the Council of Australian Governments pursue the adoption of a risk-matrix based on international standards, with capacity to incorporate general risks and specific risks.

Recommendation 7

2.7 The committee recommends that the Australian Government re-introduce legislation to repeal section 487 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

Recommendation 8

2.8 The committee recommends that the Australian Government amend the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) to remove Land Councils' ability to veto applications for exploration and/or mining licences.

Recommendation 9

2.9 The committee recommends that, if not already implemented, Commonwealth, state and territory governments should develop guidelines to assist proponents to clearly identify the costs/benefits of proposed projects, including shared economic benefits such as royalties, to landowners and other stakeholders.

Recommendation 10

2.10 The committee recommends that, in conducting their next review of land access, state and territory governments consider a statutory right to royalties for freehold landowners whose permission is sought for environmental assessment and approval purposes.

Recommendation 11

2.11 The committee recommends that state and territory governments review land access policy, legislation and regulation:

- to identify opportunities to facilitate the conversion of leasehold title to freehold title; and/or
- to remove regulatory oversight of activities on leasehold land, to put it on the same basis as freehold.

Recommendation 12

2.12 The committee recommends that the Australian Government initiate an independent review into the impact of the Deregulation Agenda on the Department of the Environment and Energy.

Recommendation 13

2.13 The committee recommends that state and territory governments explore options for facilitating reasonable access to existing Aboriginal heritage surveys.

Recommendation 14

2.14 The committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory governments review departmental policies and budgets to support the conduct of site inspections by decision-makers during the environmental assessment process.

Recommendation 15

2.15 The committee recommends that Commonwealth, state and territory governments investigate options for the greater utilisation of local knowledge and experience, including through the employment of local decision-makers.