

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT

**Output 1.1**

**Question No. 79**

**Senator Abetz asked the following question at the hearing on 27 May 2008:**

Has the Attorney-General responded to a letter from a group of activists asking him to ban lawsuits against environmental activists? If so, what was the response and will the Attorney-General make known the Government's position?

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

The Attorney-General has received correspondence from Friends of Forests and Free Speech drawing his attention to the issue of 'Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation' or SLAPP suits. The letter requested the Government implement anti-SLAPP legislation.

The Attorney-General responded on 13 May 2008. He:

- agreed that the broad issues regarding legitimate public debate and the proper conduct of litigation warrant consideration, and
- noted that the correspondents may wish to raise their views about public participation, and freedom of speech and association, during the proposed Australia-wide consultation on human rights and responsibilities.