

Appendix 1

Terms of Reference

On 18 June 2008, the Senate referred the following matter to the committee for inquiry and report by 27 November 2008:

The operation of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and other natural resource protection programmes, with particular reference to:

- (a) the findings of the National Audit Office Audit 38 Referrals, Assessments and Approvals under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;
- (b) lessons learnt from the first 10 years of operation of the EPBC Act in relation to the protection of critical habitats of threatened species and ecological communities, and potential for measures to improve their recovery;
- (c) the cumulative impacts of EPBC Act approvals on threatened species and ecological communities, for example on Cumberland Plain Woodland, Cassowary habitat, Grassy White Box Woodlands and the Paradise Dam;
- (d) the effectiveness of responses to key threats identified within the EPBC Act, including land-clearing, climate change and invasive species, and potential for future measures to build environmental resilience and facilitate adaptation within a changing climate;
- (e) the effectiveness of Regional Forest Agreements, in protecting forest species and forest habitats where the EPBC Act does not directly apply;
- (f) the impacts of other environmental programmes, eg EnviroFund, GreenCorps, Caring for our Country, Environmental Stewardship Programme and Landcare in dealing with the decline and extinction of certain flora and fauna; and
- (g) the impact of programme changes and cuts in funding on the decline or extinction of flora and fauna.