

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 (para 3.31)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth, as a party to the Port Hinchinbrook Deed of Agreement, should engage an independent assessor to report on whether the developer has been and is complying with the Deed.

The Committee recommends further that if the developer is found to be in breach of any part of the deed, the Commonwealth should act to ensure the developer complies with it and take steps to remedy any breach.

Recommendation 2 (para 3.33)

The Committee recommends that in future, Deeds of Agreement should not be used as a means of avoiding compliance with an existing regulatory regime.

Recommendation 3 (para 3.87)

The Committee recommends that local councils, and State or Commonwealth governments when involved, commit to thorough, independent environmental impact assessments for significant developments. Terms of reference should be developed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, and environmental impact assessments should be made available for public scrutiny and comment.

Recommendation 4 (para 3.87)

The Committee recommends that in cases where the Commonwealth government is involved, it should ensure that an early, consultative environmental impact assessment is conducted before any significant development is allowed to proceed.

Recommendation 5 (para 4.62)

The Committee recommends that a full assessment of acid sulfate soils at the Port Hinchinbrook development should be undertaken and a comprehensive acid sulfate abatement plan should be developed.

The Committee recommends further that if the developer is found to be in breach of the Acid Sulfate Management Plan the Commonwealth, as a party to

the Deed of Agreement, should act to ensure that the developer complies with the first part of this recommendation and remedies the effects of any breaches.

Recommendation 6 (para 4.62)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth should allocate special funds to the CSIRO to conduct both general research on acid sulfate soils and a special project that would expedite acid sulfate soil mapping around Australia.

Recommendation 7 (para 4.81)

The Committee recommends that, notwithstanding the difficulties, the Commonwealth and Queensland governments should expedite action to control threats to dugongs in the southern Great Barrier Reef region, including the reviewing of the use of gill nets in areas frequented by dugongs.

Recommendation 8 (para 5.33)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth and the Queensland governments should research the environmental effects of aquaculture on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

The Committee recommends further that pending improved knowledge of the environmental effects of aquaculture on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, discharge of effluent to the World Heritage Area should not be permitted and no new aquaculture permits in the area should be issued.

Recommendation 9 (para 5.75)

The Committee recommends that in order to achieve more independent environmental assessments of proposed developments, planning authorities rather than the developer should be responsible for selecting consultants by lot from a short list of tenderers.

Recommendation 10 (para 5.151)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth should work with the Queensland Government and local Councils whose decisions may affect the World Heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef, to expedite making regional

plans that explicitly take into account world heritage conservation as a key material consideration in land-use planning and development control decisions.

Recommendation 11 (para 5.151)

The Commonwealth should fund a program of regional planning in local government areas where planning decisions may affect World Heritage values of World Heritage areas. Funding should be conditional on using best practice planning processes.

The Commonwealth should also fund a program of information and education about World Heritage conservation in those local government areas.

Recommendation 12 (para 5.152)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth, in co-operation with the State, should expedite studies to identify Australia's World Heritage properties or potential World Heritage properties and to update as necessary their statements of World Heritage significance.

Recommendation 13 (para 5.152)

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth, in co-operation with the States, should expedite research into risks to the World Heritage values of Australia's World Heritage properties.

