

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Reference to the Committee

1.1 On 27 April 1999, the Senate referred the Jabiluka uranium mine project to the Committee for inquiry and report by 30 May 1999. (The full terms of reference are set out at the beginning of this report.) The reporting date was subsequently extended to 30 June 1999.

Conduct of the Inquiry

1.2 The Committee advertised the inquiry in *The Weekend Australian* and the *Northern Territory News* on 1 May 1999, with a nominated closing date for submissions of 21 May 1999. The Committee wrote to the Department of the Environment and Heritage and to a number of organisations, seeking written submissions. The Committee received 373 submissions, of which 320 were in the form of a standard letter. All submissions are listed in Appendix 1. Copies of non-confidential submissions were made available on request. A number of those making submissions also provided the Committee with copies of their submissions to the Jabiluka environmental assessment process and the World Heritage Committee.

1.3 The Committee held public hearings in Canberra on 11 June 1999 and in Darwin on 16 June 1999. The Committee also inspected the Jabiluka mine site on 15 June 1999. A list of witnesses who gave evidence to the Committee at public hearings, and the dates on which they were heard, is set out in Appendix 1.

Acknowledgments

1.4 The Committee wishes to thank all those who contributed to the inquiry by preparing written submissions, by giving oral evidence, by providing additional information and material where requested or by assisting with arrangements for public hearings and inspections.