



## Glossary of terms

The following definitions have been used by the Committee throughout the course of the inquiry.

adaptive management	Management practices that accommodate and respond to uncertain future events.
biodiversity	A word derived from 'biological diversity'. The variety of all life forms: the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, their genes and the communities and ecosystems of which they are part.
biogeography	The study of the distribution of species, organisms and ecosystems in geographic space and through geological time.
bioscience	The study of nature, behaviour, and uses of living organisms. (Also <i>life science</i> .)
brackish	A term used to describe water that has more salinity than fresh water, but not as much as seawater.
citizen science	Scientific research that is carried out, in whole or in part, by amateur or nonprofessional scientists.
community ecology	Study of the organisation and functioning of communities, which are assemblages of interacting populations.
connectivity	The extent to which particular ecosystems are joined with others of similar kind; the ease with which organisms can move across the landscape.
conservation	Prudent management of natural resources in order to preserve and protect them.
coral bleaching	The whitening of a coral colony, indicative of environmental stress, whereby the coral expels symbiotic algal cells (zooxanthellae) from its body.

cropping	Cutting and collecting mature produce from the land.
ecological niche	The relational position of a species or population within an ecosystem, with respect to both its role and the space it inhabits.
ecology	The scientific study of the distribution and abundance of life on Earth, and the interactions between organisms and their environment.
endemic	Occurring only in the stated area.
estuary	A partly enclosed coastal body of water with one or more rivers or streams flowing into it, and with a free connection to the open sea.
fauna	Animal life.
fire regime	The combination of fire frequency, intensity, interval and season.
floodplain	Flat land adjacent a stream or river that is naturally subject to flooding.
flora	Plant life.
gene technology	Activities concerned with understanding the expression of genes, taking advantage of natural genetic variation, modifying genes, and transferring genes to new hosts.
grazing	A type of feeding where herbivores eat grass or other low vegetation.
hydrodynamics	The study of liquids in motion.
hydrology	The study of the movement, distribution and quality of water.
hypersaline	Salt levels surpassing that of ocean water.
in situ	A Latin phrase which translates literally to 'in position'. In ecological terms it refers to an organism in its natural habitat.
intertidal	The foreshore or littoral region that is above the low-water mark and below the high-water mark.
invertebrate	An animal lacking a backbone (spinal column).
monoculture	A single, homogenous culture without diversity; a system with low diversity.
monsoon	A wind system that reverses with the seasons.

---

oology	The study of bird eggs, nests, and breeding behaviour.
phenology	The study of periodic plant and animal life cycle events and how these are influenced by seasonal and interannual variations in climate.
photovoltaic	Technology for converting sunlight directly into electricity, usually with photovoltaic (solar) cells.
phylogeny	The evolutionary development and history of a species or higher taxonomic group of organisms.
potable	Fit or suitable for drinking; drinking water.
propagate	To cause an organism to multiply by processes of natural reproduction from parent stock.
refugia	Areas where special environmental circumstances enable a species or community of species to survive after extinction in surrounding areas.
remnant	A remaining portion of natural habitat.
resilience	The capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while undergoing change so as to still retain function, structure, identity and feedbacks; the extent to which a system is able to change in response to a disturbance.
riparian	Relating to the interface between land and a watercourse.
substrate	A surface or substance upon which an organism grows or is attached.
systematics (biological)	The study of diversification of living forms, past and present, and the relationships among living things through time.
taxonomy	The science of identifying and classifying species.
tidal mudflats	Coastal wetlands that form when mud is deposited from tides or rivers.
tidal zone	An area subject to tidal action.
tipping point	The point at which a relatively small change in external conditions causes a rapid change in an ecosystem, often leading to an abrupt change in ecosystem health. (Also <i>critical threshold</i> or <i>ecological threshold</i> .)
totem	An object or natural phenomenon (often an animal or plant) that serves as a token or emblem of a family, clan or group.

---

---

tributary	A stream or river that flows into a main or parent river or lake. A tributary does not flow directly into a sea or ocean.
vertebrate	An animal with a backbone (spinal column), including: sharks and rays; bony fish; amphibians; reptiles; birds; and mammals.
viticulture	The science, production and study of grapes and their culture; Grape-growing.
zooxanthellae	Parasitic or symbiotic yellow or brown algae living in various marine invertebrates (such as corals).

---