



Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Budget Estimates 2020-21 Monday, 19 October 2020 Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.02am until 10.24pm.

The committee called the environment-related outcomes and agencies of the Agriculture, Water and the Environment portfolio, including:

- Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment; Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority; and Director of National Parks.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

- increases in media monitoring expenditure;
- preparation of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Streamlining Environmental Approvals) Bill 2020;
- proposed Guildford Wind Farm in Tasmania;
- nature of EPBC Act assessments, controlled actions and mitigation strategies;
- impacts on Tasmania's Wedge-tailed Eagle due to windfarm projects;
- ANAO's report into Referrals, Assessments and Approvals of Controlled Actions including conflict of interest register established by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment;
- bushfire response funding for threatened species;
- status of the proposed independent regulator;
- Murray Darling Basin and the EPBC Act;
- plans for a renewed threatened species strategy;
- issue of feral cats and their impact on threatened species on Kangaroo Island;
- threatened species and recovery plans;
- water trigger and the assessment process of the EPBC Act in relation to the Adani mine;
- extent of the 2020 coral bleaching event;
- creation of regional jobs from national parks funding;
- National Waste Policy Action Plan funding;
- department's knowledge of Rio Tinto's activities at the Juukan Gorge;
- application to protect sacred Djab Wurrung birthing trees from the expansion of the Western Highway, Victoria;
- re-structuring of the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Corporate Plan's performance metrics in relation to climate change adaptation; and
- climate change risk to Australia's coasts.

The committee will meet at 9.00am on Tuesday, 20 October 2020 in the Senate Committee Room 2S3, with the environment-related outcomes and agencies of the Agriculture, Water and the Environment portfolio returning, including: Bureau of Meteorology; Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder; Sydney Harbour Federation Trust; and Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The committee will then move to the emissions and energy-related outcomes and agencies of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources portfolio, including Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources; Australian Renewable Energy Agency; Clean Energy Regulator; Climate Change Authority; Clean Energy Finance Corporation; Snowy Hydro Limited; and National Wind Farm Commissioner.