



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Ref: EC20-000131

Mr Stephen Palethorpe
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Palethorpe

Thank you for your email of 18 March 2020 inviting the Department to provide a submission to inform the Standing Committee's consideration of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Climate Trigger) Bill 2020*.

The second independent review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) is currently underway, led by Professor Graeme Samuel AC. Professor Samuel is considering the operation of the EPBC Act and the extent to which its objects have been achieved. The review's terms of reference specifically include consideration of opportunities to address current and future environmental challenges.

Professor Samuel released a discussion paper in November 2019 inviting submissions to the review. This paper included discussion about the role of the EPBC Act and referred to known stakeholder views, such as interest from some groups in having a climate trigger in the Act.

Professor Samuel is currently reviewing submissions from stakeholders who have responded to the discussion paper by making formal submissions to the review. This will inform the review's interim report, expected in June 2020, and the final report is due in October 2020. These reports may be relevant to the Committee in its consideration of this Bill.

The Department will support the Government in responding to the recommendations arising from the EPBC Act review.

I trust this information is of assistance to the Standing Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dean Knudson
Deputy Secretary
Environment Group

19 May 2020