



MEDIA RELEASE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Inquiry into streamlining environmental regulation, 'green tape',
and one stop shops

*Chair: Alex Hawke MP
Deputy Chair: Tony Zappia MP*

Environment Committee gives red light to green tape

Preserving Australia's precious environment can be done more efficiently and effectively, according to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment, which today released the report of its inquiry into streamlining environmental regulation.

The Committee Chair, Mr Alex Hawke MP, said that it's vitally important that we protect Australia's unique, precious natural environment.

"That is something we all agree on. Australia has some very stringent environmental protection laws, and there is no suggestion that the preservation of the environment should be compromised in any way," he said.

"Throughout the course of this inquiry, the committee found several instances where environmental laws were duplicative, confusing, overly onerous, or were clearly not delivering any environmental benefit. This sort of unnecessary environmental regulation, or 'green tape', serves only to hamper business, slow down the economy, and reduce investor confidence. And that doesn't benefit anyone."

Mr Hawke said the committee listened to what members of the public have told the inquiry.

"They have told us what is working, and what is not. They have told us what they would like to see changed and the committee has listened and made 13 recommendations to the government."

The recommendations cover a range of environmental regulation, including energy-related laws, the listing of threatened species, improving the consistency of environmental laws between the different states and territories, reducing duplication, making environmental data more readily available, and making reporting requirements more user-friendly.

Other recommendations relate to the government's 'one stop shop' proposal for environmental assessments and approvals, which will see state and territory governments assessing and giving final approval to development projects that fall under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

"The committee has made some very good and very practical recommendations for changes, and I believe these will complement the federal government's deregulation agenda nicely," Mr Hawke concluded.

The Committee's report is available online at: www.aph.gov.au/GreenTapeReport.

Further details about the inquiry, including submissions, terms of reference, and public hearing transcripts can be obtained from the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/greentape.

For media comment: please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Alex Hawke, on (02) 6277 4430 (Parliament House) and (02) 9899 7211 (electorate office)

For further information: please contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 4580, email environment.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/environment>