



Australian Government

Australian Government response to the
Senate Environment and Communications References report:

In hot water: the impacts of climate change on marine fisheries and
biodiversity

May 2024

Response

Recommendation 1

- a. The committee recommends that the Australian Government review the funding provided for research into the effects of climate change on the marine environment and possible adaptation measures to ensure the funding is appropriate for facing the challenges of climate change.
- b. The committee further recommends that the Australian Government commit to allocating long-term funding for climate monitoring, such as the Integrated Marine Observing System.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 2

- a. The committee recommends that the Australian Government review the funding provided to operate the RV Investigator with a view to:
 - increasing the long-term funding provided by the Government; and
 - obtaining greater financial support from other parties, such as through industry research partnerships.
- b. The committee further recommends that the Australian Government review the processes associated with researchers gaining access to the RV Investigator with a view to increasing the number of days the vessel can be used for research.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Australian Government take a national leadership role in funding and supporting connections between the fishing and aquaculture industry and research organisations to help industry understand and adjust to the effects of climate change.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that the Australian Government direct the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to engage with industry representatives to consider how information about responding to biosecurity challenges can be shared more effectively within the fisheries industry.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that, as part of the National Landcare Program, greater emphasis be placed on marine natural resource management and projects be supported that will improve marine biodiversity and deliver sustainable fisheries and aquaculture outcomes in the face of climate change.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to formalise and enhance engagement between Traditional Owners involved in Indigenous Protected Areas, universities and relevant Commonwealth departments and agencies regarding the effects of climate change on the marine environment, including appropriate local management responses to changes and emerging threats.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that the Australian Government expedite work to update offshore constitutional settlement agreements regarding the jurisdictional boundaries between fisheries.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends that state and Northern Territory governments give effect to recommendation 4.1 of the Productivity Commission's report Marine fisheries and aquaculture relating to licence arrangements for recreational fishers.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends that state and Northern Territory governments explore innovative methods to capture recreational fishing data.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 10

a. The committee recommends that the Australian, state and territory governments review all environmental and resource management legislation to ensure that adequate consideration of the effects of climate change is expressly required as part of assessment and decision-making processes.

b. In particular, the committee recommends that establishing a greenhouse trigger be included in the upcoming independent review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission a feasibility study into the creation of a National Oceans Commission or consider establishing a dedicated oceans outcome as part of the Department of the Environment and Energy's responsibilities.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that the network of marine parks established in 2012 by the Gillard Government be maintained and that additions to the network be made if developments since 2012 mean that greater conservation efforts in particular areas are required.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 13

The committee recommends that the Australian and Queensland Governments amend the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan so that the plan:

- includes climate change adaptation and mitigation actions;
- has a focus on a sustainable, functional Reef in the face of emerging cumulative impacts; and
- provides greater emphasis on empowering local people and communities to deliver on-ground action that will benefit the Reef.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Recommendation 14

In light of climate change pressures, the committee recommends that the Australian Government review the funding provided to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to ensure it is adequately resourced to meet its functions under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Dissenting Recommendation 1

That the Australian Government provide further funding to increase the number of days the RV Investigator can be at sea.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Dissenting Recommendation 2

That the Australian Government immediately increase funding provided for researching the effects of climate change and weather, with an emphasis on the marine environment and possible adaptation measures.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Dissenting Recommendation 3

That the Australian Government appoint a National Oceans Commissioner.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.

Dissenting Recommendation 4

That, within the first twelve months after the appointment of a National Oceans Commissioner, the Australian Government direct the Commissioner to undertake consultation and report on whether the current allocation of policy, regulatory, coordination and research responsibilities within the Commonwealth public sector is appropriate for addressing the most pressing challenges facing Australia's oceans and seas.

Response

NOTED

The Government notes this recommendation. However, given the passage of time since this report was tabled, a substantive Government response is no longer appropriate.