



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

PG/308

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NEW POLICY STATEMENT FOR WIND FARM INDUSTRY

Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett today released an invaluable tool to help the wind farm industry meet national environment law.

Mr Garrett said the Wind Farm Industry Policy Statement will help wind farm operators decide whether to refer wind farm proposals for assessment and approval under national environment law.

"Wind energy has the potential to deliver a significant proportion of Australia's future electricity needs, and will play an important role in achieving our target of producing 20 per cent of our electricity needs from renewable sources by 2020," Mr Garrett said.

"The Rudd Labor Government is serious about lowering our carbon emissions and producing energy in a cleaner way.

"But we also know that we must agree on how best to manage issues like turbine noise, impacts on landscapes, and impacts on wildlife, including birds and bats."

Responsibility for the assessment and approval of proposed wind farms rests primarily with the states and territories. However, under national environment law, the federal Environment Minister plays a role where there are potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance.

This policy statement is the first of two key documents that will help assess wind farm developments through improved guidance and consistent advice. The second key document is the National Wind Farm Development Guidelines.

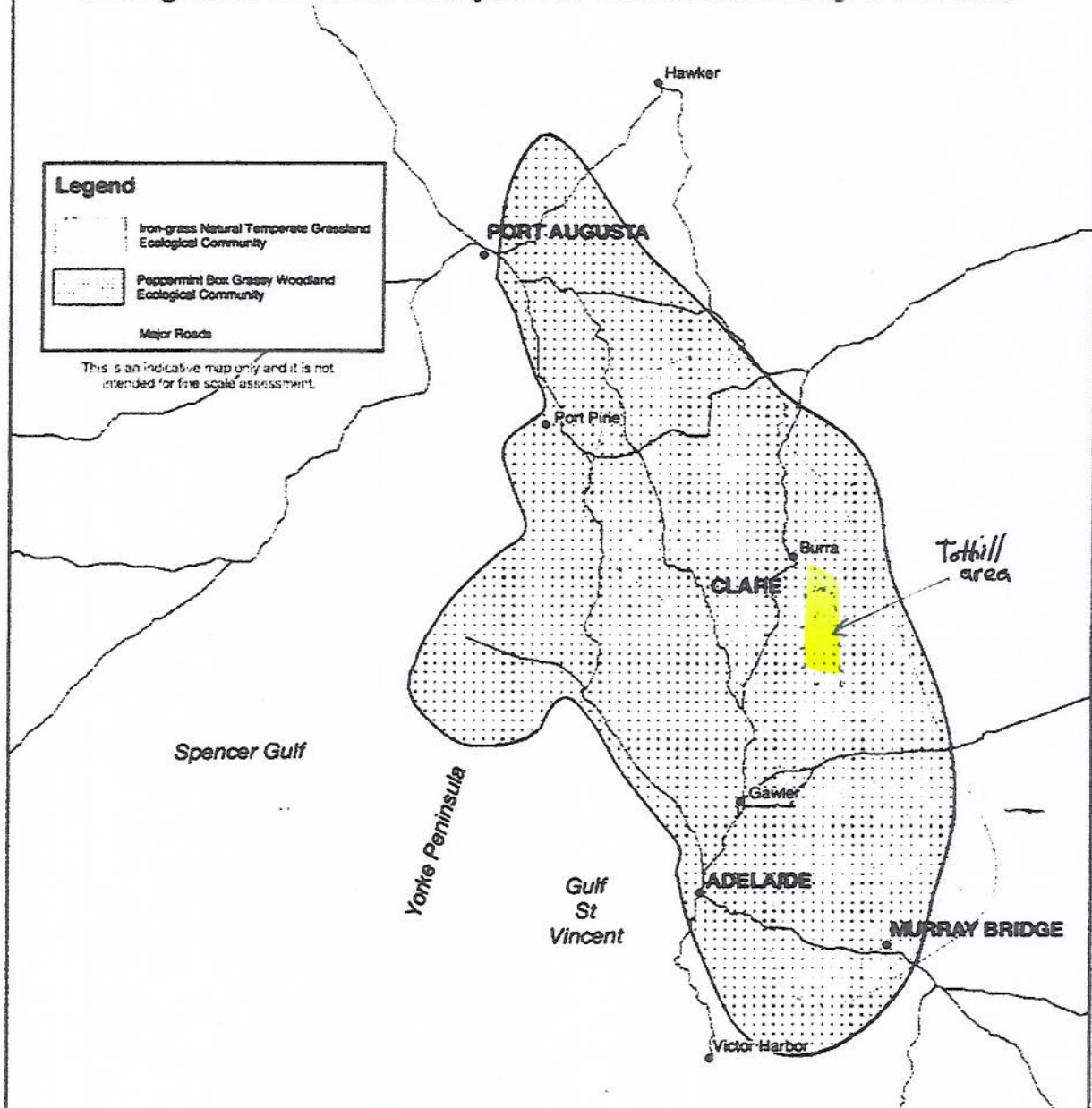
Mr Garrett said these national guidelines will consider a broader range of issues, and was a key recommendation coming out of the Environment Protection and Heritage Council's meeting last November.

"These guidelines will improve consistency and transparency in the wind farm planning and approval processes, and assist communities, developers and governments in promoting best practice, especially best practice in community consultation — a vital aspect of any new development."

"We are working with the states and territories to develop these guidelines; they will be available for public comment later this year, and all going well, they will be considered by the Council in early 2010," Mr Garrett said.

The EPBC Act Policy Statement 2.3 – Wind Farm Industry is available from the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Community Information Unit on 1800 803 772 or at www.environment.gov.au/epbc/policy/index.html

General area in which patches of Peppermint Box Grassy Woodland and Iron-grass Natural Temperate Grassland may be found



The peppermint Box Grassy Woodland of South Australia is nationally listed as a critically endangered ecological community under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Proposed Wind Farm Areas
 Wind Monitoring Towers
 km
 0 5 10

