



List of recommendations

Overcoming impediments in establishing Australian bioindustries

Recommendation 125

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government

- increase funding for baseline studies of the Australian biota;
- target additional funds for collecting activities in bioactive hot spots;
- fund a larger volume of taxonomic work than at present and ensure sufficient young taxonomists are being trained to undertake this work;
- provide more funding to maintain and expand existing collections so that they provide a comprehensive coverage of Australia's biota, including microorganisms; and
- ensure that commercial users contribute in kind or financially, through benefit sharing arrangements, to growing and maintaining collections and databases.

Recommendation 226

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government provide additional funding for digitising and networking information about all of Australia's biological resources.

Recommendation 3	27
<p>The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government, in consultation with state and territory governments, industry and the research community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ develop a national strategy for bioinformatics; and ■ assist in funding its implementation so that the necessary infrastructure and skills are available to provide efficient access to information about Australia's biota. 	
Recommendation 4	31
<p>The committee recommends that Biotechnology Australia and the Attorney-General's Department, in conjunction with the state and territory governments, ensure that information about the ownership of biological resources is compiled, and made publicly available as a single, easily accessible source.</p>	
Recommendation 5	32
<p>The committee recommends that the Attorney-General ask the Australian Law Reform Commission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ to inquire into the impact on the use of native biota of the different property rights regimes across Australia; and ■ to recommend on a nationally consistent regime that would facilitate this use, with due consideration of the wider ramifications of any changes. 	
Recommendation 6	34
<p>The committee recommends that Environment Australia, in consultation with state and territory agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ develop an electronic gateway to information about access arrangements in all jurisdictions; and ■ take a lead in coordinating the development of a simplified, streamlined system of applying for permits. 	
Recommendation 7	50
<p>The committee recommends that the regulations governing access and benefit sharing under section 301 of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> be subject to review after 12 months to ensure that they are not impeding the development of opportunities arising from bioprospecting.</p>	
Recommendation 8	50

The committee recommends that, when finalising the regulations under section 301 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the Commonwealth government:

- ensure that the regulations do not create new property rights;
- obtain a detailed regulatory impact statement; and
- examine fully the implications of the regulations for Australia's access to overseas plant genetic material.

Recommendation 951

The committee recommends that Environment Australia and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia give a high priority to:

- finalising the regulations on access to biological resources and the sharing of benefits from them, under section 301 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*; and
- working with state and territory governments to establish nationally consistent arrangements.

Recommendation 1052

The committee recommends that, when granting access to biological resources, the Commonwealth government:

- ensure access for non commercial activities; and
- with commercial activities, ensure a balance between open competitive access and restricting access by granting exclusive use.

Exclusivity should be restricted by permit conditions such as duration, area or species collected, and uses to be explored.

Recommendation 1152

The committee recommends that, when finalising benefit sharing arrangements, the Commonwealth government ensure that commercial activity is not discouraged by the benefits bioprospectors are required to provide.

When negotiating non monetary benefits, emphasis should be placed on providing support for regional development and the lodging of information and specimens in publicly accessible databases and collections (see recommendation 1).

Recommendation 1252

The committee recommends that the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* be amended to extend export controls to all elements of Australia's non human, native biota, with particular reference to microorganisms.

Recommendation 1356

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government ensure that the major publicly funded research organisations are sufficiently well funded to purchase the equipment needed to meet present and future demands.

Recommendation 1459

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government facilitate the establishment of a national biotechnology transfer centre that should include scaling up facilities for bioprocessing.

Recommendation 1560

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government:

- audit the availability of skills needed in the biotechnology sector, including those required to develop bioindustries;
- ensure that relevant training is available; and
- promote uptake of training opportunities.

Recommendation 1661

The committee recommends that the Commonwealth government:

- continue to provide extensive information about biotechnology in its public awareness program; and
- ensure that the contribution of bioprospecting and biodiscovery to economic development is covered in this program, including the benefits that bioindustries offer to the environment, medicine and agriculture.

Regional activity

Recommendation 1776

The committee recommends that Biotechnology Australia make information about grant programs available on its web site in a clear and easily accessible form, and provide a link to the GrantsLINK web site.

Recommendation 1878

The committee recommends that the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation:

- aggregate funds into a specific program for researching and promoting the development of industries based on bioprospecting Australia's native biota and bioprocessing using introduced plants; and
- implement this program in the context of all the components of business development involved in establishing a new industry.

Environmental impacts

Recommendation 1986

The committee recommends that Environment Australia give a high priority to continuing its work with state and territory governments to develop a nationally consistent approach to establishing conservation areas that comprehensively cover all species and ecosystems.

A national strategy for the development of new biobased industries

Recommendation 2091

The committee recommends that:

- a national strategy be developed to promote bioprospecting, bioprocessing and the establishment of industries based on these activities; and
- Biotechnology Australia sponsor the development and implementation of the strategy.

The strategy should:

- indicate how bioprospecting will be used over the next two decades to contribute to existing industries and develop new ones;
- provide information about the government support available for bioproduct development, especially for the earlier stages in the bioproduct chain;
- promote collaboration and networking; and
- address biobased industry development in regional Australia.

Recommendation 2191

The committee recommends that Biotechnology Australia be sufficiently funded to develop and implement the strategy.

Recommendation 2294

The committee recommends that Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia:

- give a higher profile to promoting the development and establishment of industries based on bioprospecting and bioprocessing; and
- work closely with AusIndustry to promote opportunities for developing industries from bioprospecting and bioprocessing.