



Improved protections for the Antarctic environment and tourists

The Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties will today examine a series of amendments to the *Antarctic Treaty* that will further protect the Antarctic environment.

If accepted, these amendments will:

- establish an environmental liability regime placing the onus on operators to be prepared for, and have enough funds to repair, environmental damage they have caused;
- require tourist operators in the Antarctic to have contingency plans and insurance to cover the cost of dealing with medical emergencies in the Antarctic; and
- protect human health and safety and the Antarctic environment by making previous voluntary regulatory requirements mandatory.

"These amendments are clearly aligned with Australia's commitment to protecting the Antarctic environment," Committee Chair, Mr Kelvin Thomson MP, said. "But the Committee will need to be convinced that the Government will adequately resource enforcement measures to ensure real compliance."

The Committee will also be examining proposed amendments to the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), which are intended to ensure the ITU has a reliable income base.

Public Hearing: Monday 22 August 2011, Committee Room 2R1 — All welcome

10.30 am— **Instrument Amending the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union (Geneva, 1992) and the Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (Geneva, 1992)**

Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

10.45 am **Measures 1, 4 and 15 – Amendments to the Antarctic Treaty (1961)**

Australian Antarctic Division, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Copies of the *National Interest Analysis* and treaty text are available under Treaties tabled on 5 July 2011 at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm>

Alternatively, interested parties may email jsct@aph.gov.au or phone (02) 6277 4002.

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