

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio

Question No: 76
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Environment Standards Division
Topic: Mine site rehabilitation
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 24 February 2016
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

What about in the case of coal mines in the GBR catchment where those mines might one day become toxic, saline lakes leaching water into the Dawson and Fitzroy rivers and polluting the Reef? Are those potential future risks captured in the EPBC Act?

Answer:

The broader regulation of the resources sector, including mine site rehabilitation is the responsibility of state and territory governments.

The regulation of the resource sector under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is confined to those actions which have the potential to significantly impact on matters of national environmental significance.

Controlled actions are subject to a rigorous assessment process under the Act. Where significant impacts to matters of national environmental significance are identified during the assessment process, conditions are applied to approvals to avoid, mitigate or offset those impacts.