

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

Question No: 36
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 5
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: Toro Energy
Hansard Page: 92
Question Date: 24 February 2014
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLAM: My second question goes to a very different part of the world: up in the north-east goldfields. What progress has Toro Energy achieved towards realising the 35 outstanding conditions placed on their federal environmental approval, if they have made any progress? What can you tell us about the company's recent purchase of Mega Uranium and the Lake Maitland deposit? They have greatly expanded the scope of the project. How does that sit in terms of the Commonwealth environmental assessment frame?

Dr Knudson: I do not have the information at hand with respect to that specific question. If it is agreeable I would like to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Wiluna Uranium Project (EPBC 2009/5174) was approved by the then Minister on 2 April 2013 with 36 conditions. The approval holder, Toro Energy Limited, is yet to submit management plans required by the conditions of approval. The action cannot commence prior to approval of the management plans.

Toro Energy Limited referred a project involving the Lake Maitland deposit to the Department on 24 February 2014, which was determined to be a controlled action requiring assessment and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* on 25 March 2014. The controlling provisions of the proposed action are *listed threatened species and ecological communities* and *nuclear actions*.

The assessment approach decision has not yet been made as the Department has sought further information regarding assessment of the project by the Western Australian Government to determine if a bilateral assessment can occur.