

ENVIRONMENT — STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

889. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

- (1) When was the most recent *State of the Environment Report* for Western Australia published?
- (2) Did the State Government prepare a formal response to the recommendations in this report:
  - (a) if yes to (2), when was it published; and
  - (b) if no to (2), why not?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that the Commonwealth and all other Australian States carry out regular *State of the Environment* reporting at 3 to 5 year intervals:
  - (a) if yes to (3), why does Western Australia not do this?
- (4) When is the next *Western Australian State of the Environment Report* planned to commence and when will it be published?
- (5) Does the Minister agree that regular *State of the Environment* reporting is essential for identifying trends, key issues and providing recommendations and information for effective environmental management:
  - (a) if no to (5), why not; and
  - (b) if no to (5), how does the Minister consider that the public, other levels of government and decision makers should be made aware of trends in environmental parameters at a State level, including biodiversity and climate change, so these can be considered in planning and management by a range of stakeholders?
- (6) Will the Minister be recommending that the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* be amended to provide for periodic *State of Environment* reporting:
  - (a) If no to (7), why not?

**Hon Stephen Dawson replied:**

- (1) 2007.
- (2) No
  - (a) Not applicable.
  - (b) The Government used the reports in its internal processes to plan its approach to environmental and biodiversity management.
- (3)–(6) The Commonwealth government generally publishes an Australian State of the Environment report every five years. Western Australia provides input and data collected by the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation into the Commonwealth State of the Environment Report. Many of these databases are publicly available.

The McGowan Government recognises the importance of reliable data to underpin evidence-based decision making, and has funded the Biodiversity Information Office to collate biodiversity data and make it accessible. Conserving and protecting Western Australia’s unique environment is a shared responsibility and the Western Australian Government is working collaboratively with stakeholders to implement key planning and management initiatives such as Western Australia’s Climate Policy, Native Vegetation Policy and Environmental Offsets Policy.

The independent Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) publishes a report annually under section 21 of the *Environment Protection Act 1986*. The EPA’s annual report is tabled in Parliament and sets out the activities of the EPA and environmental matters generally. Historically, the EPA’s annual reports have outlined key environmental issues and challenges within Western Australia.