More Power To Protect Our Environment

The Territory Government today confirmed its commitment to protecting our environment, passing legislation strengthening the powers of the Environmental Protection Authority.

The independent environmental watchdog will now have a new auditing and monitoring role backed up by harsher penalties.

Environment Minister Karl Hampton welcomed the body’s new powers to protect our Territory.

“Preservation of our unique environment is a vital issue to Territorians and this Government,” Mr Hampton said.

“We were the first Territory Government to introduce an independent EPA and this legislation gives it even greater powers to preserve and protect our magnificent environmental and cultural heritage.”

As well as an auditing role on environmental incidents and EIS recommendations, the EPA now has the crucial task of tracking overall environmental outcomes.

“The authority now fulfils a role that brings it closer in touch with the concerns of Territorians” Mr Hampton said.

“Territorians can now use the authority to instigate review of environmental issues they feel have not been adequately dealt with by the relevant department”.

The EPA retains its status as an independent and transparent body - all of its findings are tabled directly to parliament.

“The EPA has stronger powers to require information from agencies and industry with new offences created for non-compliance; this watchdog has the teeth necessary to do its job.”

Mr Hampton also recognised the contribution of the Independent Member for Nelson Gerry Wood and the Member for Brennan Peter Chandler to the process.

“These changes to the EPA form part of our agreement with the Member for Nelson and we thank Gerry for his constructive input in the drafting of this important legislation,” Mr Hampton said.

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