

Submission Form for Comments and Feedback

Draft Advice: Response to Dr Allan Hawke's Review of NT Assessment and Approval Processes

Submissions close: Friday 30 September 2016, 5pm

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<p>Your comments will be publicly available.</p> <p>Mark the box here <input type="checkbox"/> if you do not want your comments to be made publicly available.</p> <p>Mark the box here <input type="checkbox"/> if you do not want your identity to be made publicly available.</p>			

Section	Comment
Executive Summary	<p>Top End Native Plant Society (TENPS) strongly supports the immediate adoption of a single environmental approval framework such as Hawke Option 2. A system that allows robust independent and transparent assessment and approval recommendations is requested. Another major consideration is the simplification of the approvals process in the NT whereby the process across industry sectors is the same providing a more efficient and more level playing field for proponents of projects in the NT.</p> <p>TENPS request that a sectorial framework (Hawke Option 3) is not pursued for a range of reasons including the high level of conflict of interest that is evident by sectorial approval of projects in the NT. As expressed by one of our members, giving an agency the primary role of promoting and developing an industry at the same time as providing the primary advice on environmental approval is like releasing a child to run free in the lolly shop without supervision.</p> <p>Hawke Option 1 to maintain the status quo with incremental improvements is not a viable option either. The past failure of the NT Government to properly manage sand mining on the Howard Sand Plains near Darwin provides strong evidence of the inadequacy of option 1.</p>
Executive Summary	TENPS strongly support increased accountability to the public including that "The proponent would be expected to provide annual

Please complete the form and send it via one of the following by no later than Friday 30 September 5pm:

Email: NTEPA.Consult@nt.gov.au

Post: NT EPA, GPO Box 3675, Darwin NT, 0801

Privacy: Your personal information will be used for the purpose of collecting and collating comments received on the Issues Paper. The NT EPA is subject to the *Information Act* and its Regulations. Information will not be disclosed to a third party, unless required by law or otherwise stated.

NORTHERN TERRITORY ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

Section	Comment
	compliance reports on implementation of the environmental approval conditions, signed by the CEO or their delegate. These reports are to be made public.”
Executive Summary	Public accountability and confidence in the system should be enhanced by public availability to the supplement to the draft EIS. Furthermore, the proponent must provide adequate response to the public’s (including agencies’) comments about the draft EIS.
Executive Summary	Public accountability and confidence in the system should be enhanced by public release of the NT EPA’s assessment reports and the minister’s environmental approval and statement of reasons.
Executive Summary	TENPS recognize that the ongoing independence of the NT EPA is of utmost importance to the wise use of resources in the NT. The implementation of and public perception of an independent authority providing a high level of input into decisions on the sustainable use of Territory resources is most important for the long-term quality of life for Territorians and confidence in the decision making process.
5.3.1	TENPS strongly reject any attempt to remove the capacity for the NT EPA to provide the Minister for the Environment with policy advice on its own initiative.
5.3.1	Most if not all the proposed changes listed in this section appear to reduce the independence of the NT EPA. The independence and capacity of the NT EPA should be enhanced rather than reduced.

General comments
<p>In summary TENPS want a simplified, independent, robust and publically accountable system for environmental approvals and compliance and thus request the immediate adoption of an environmental approval framework such as Hawke Option 2. Avoidance of severe environmental degradation is a far preferable future than attempting to either patch up past damage or, as is often the case, deal with situations where environmental damage may be irreparable. Avoidance of severe environmental degradation is import to minimize the long-term decline in the quality of life for future Territorians. It is important to many of our members that future generations have the opportunity to experience first hand the delights of our native plants and animals and the great landscapes that make the Territory such a special place to live.</p>
<p>We thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion about our future quality of life.</p>