



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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Dr Bill Freeland
Chair
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 3675
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Dear Dr Freeland

I refer to the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority's (NT EPA) *Environmental Quality Report: Biodiversity of the Howard Sand Plains Site of Conservation Significance* (the Report) and *Recommendations Concerning Preservation of the Threatened Biodiversity of the Howard Sand Plains Site of Conservation Significance* (the Advice) which you provided to me on 30 September 2015.

As you are aware, under section 27 of the *Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority Act*, I am required to prepare a response to the NT EPA regarding the Advice.

The issues raised by the NT EPA are complex and relate to the activities of a number of Government departments. I have tasked the Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment with coordinating a response, which takes into account comments by stakeholders and the various Government agencies with responsibilities in this area, with a view to ensuring that my response is consistent with this Government's vision for a balanced environment.

Unfortunately, this process is taking longer than expected. I am therefore writing to advise you that I will require additional time in which to complete my response, and anticipate providing the advice to you in late June 2016.

If you have any questions in relation to this matter, please contact Ms Nerida Bradley, Executive Director Environment, at environment.policy@nt.gov.au or on 8924 4031.

Yours sincerely

GARY HIGGINS

26 APR 2016

