

s22

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 3 January 2018 9:46 AM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); Tregurtha, James (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Thanks Bruce

I have passed on timing, etc to Minister and team.

s22

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 2 January 2018 5:10 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); Tregurtha, James (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Hi s22

Further to our conversation today, the key points we need to confirm s34(1)(c) are:

s34(1)(c)

While there may be some flexibility with these timeframes, I suggest we work to them in the first instance. Moving earlier will position us better s22

As discussed, lets touch base early next week to discuss next steps, noting yours and the Minister's availability is likely limited this month.

Thanks  
Bruce

Bruce Edwards  
Acting First Assistant Secretary  
Environment Standards Division  
6274 1077 : s22

s22 (Protected)

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Saturday, 27 January 2018 3:12 PM  
**To:** Evans, Jo (Protected); Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Cc:** Tregurtha, James (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)  
s34(1)(c)

s34(1)(c)

**From:** Evans, Jo (Protected)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 January 2018 11:35 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** Tregurtha, James (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Thx Bruce. Pm meeting now Friday.

Sent with BlackBerry Work  
([www.blackberry.com](http://www.blackberry.com))

**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected) <[Bruce.Edwards@protected.environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@protected.environment.gov.au)>  
**Date:** Thursday, 25 Jan 2018, 6:04 pm  
**To:** s22 (Protected) s22 @protected.environment.gov.au  
**Cc:** Tregurtha, James (Protected) <[James.Tregurtha@protected.environment.gov.au](mailto:James.Tregurtha@protected.environment.gov.au)>, Knudson, Dean (Protected) <[Dean.Knudson@protected.environment.gov.au](mailto:Dean.Knudson@protected.environment.gov.au)>, Evans, Jo (Protected) <[Jo.Evans@protected.environment.gov.au](mailto:Jo.Evans@protected.environment.gov.au)>, s22 (Protected) s22 @protected.environment.gov.au, s22 (Protected) s22 @protected.environment.gov.au, s22 (Protected) s22 @protected.environment.gov.au  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Hi s22

Thanks for your assistance today in walking the Minister through the approach s34(1)(c).

I thought it useful to loop-back on the next steps and timing.

s34(1)(c)

s334(1)(c)

s22

Please let me know if any of the above plan needs adjusting.

Cheers

Bruce  
AS, Policy and Reform  
6274 1877

s22 (Protected)

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 6 February 2018 4:18 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** RE: FYI: MB18\_900061 Minister Meeting with Agriculture Minister [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Hi, I've been out all day so missed this note earlier, sorry. We'll loop back via Dean.

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**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 6 February 2018 9:30 AM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Subject:** RE: FYI: MB18\_900061 Minister Meeting with Agriculture Minister [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Hi Bruce,

s34(3)

If so, can you please provide to Dean for his meeting with AM Price this afternoon.

Cheers,  
N

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Monday, 5 February 2018 5:58 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** Tregurtha, James (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** FW: FYI: MB18\_900061 Minister Meeting with Agriculture Minister [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

s22

Please see attached a meeting brief to support the meeting tomorrow morning between Minister Frydenberg and Minister Littleproud.

Sorry for the lateness in submitting. We've had a few issues including with PDMS not cooperating.

Dean and James are coming up to assist in the discussion.  
Bruce

Copy to

To: Minister for the Environment and Energy (For Information)

- Secretary
- Mr Cahill
- Ms Evans
- Mr Knudson
- Mr Heferen
- Ms Goodwin
- Mr Sullivan
- Mr Tregurtha
- Chief of Staff

**ENVIRONMENT REGULATION REFORM (20 FEBRUARY 2018 SUBMISSION)**

**Timing:** For meeting on Tuesday 6 February 2018

**Recommendation:**

1. That you note the contents in preparation for your meeting.

**Noted / Please discuss**

**Minister:**

**Date:**

<b>Clearing Officer:</b> Sent: 5/2/2018	James Tregurtha	FAS, Environment Standards Division	Ph: 6274 1077 Mob: s22
Contact Officer:	Bruce Edwards	AS, Policy Reform Branch	Ph: 6274 1877 Mob: s22

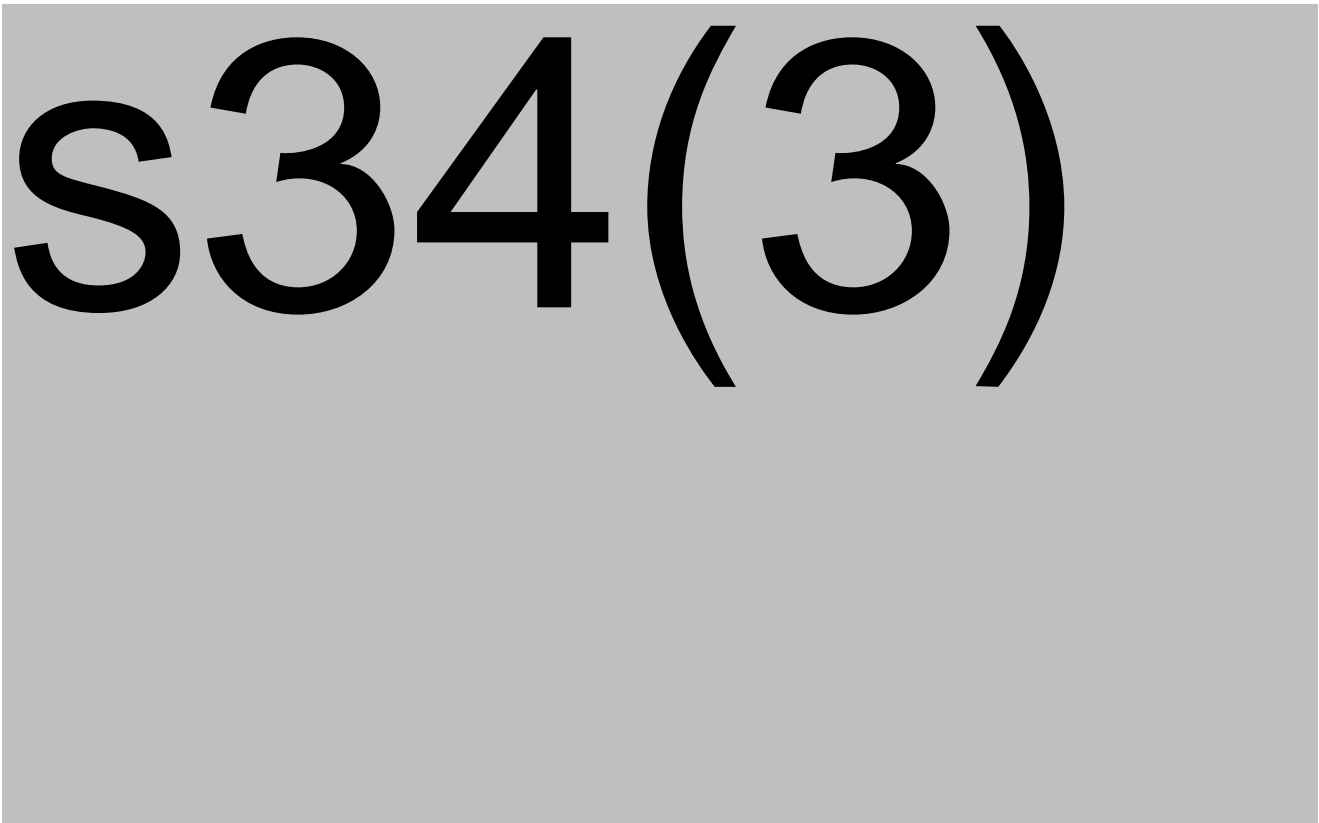
**Meeting with:** The Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

**Prior meetings:** Nil

**Proposed note taker:** Dean Knudson, Deputy Secretary, Environment Protection Group

**What we want:** Support to achieve tangible outcomes for the agriculture sector, deliverable in the short-term, while maintaining environmental standards.

**What they want:** Improved regulatory efficiencies between farmers and the EPBC Act.



S34(3)

**Attachments**

A: Talking points

**Talking Points**

- Farmers are important stewards of Australia's unique environment who contribute to our economic growth and social fabric.
- While the majority of farmers don't need approval under the EPBC Act, I understand there are uncertainties about their obligations under national environmental law and confusion about the responsibilities between Commonwealth, State and Territory governments for protecting the environment.

s34(3)

*If required,*

s22

s34(1)(c)

s22



s22

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** [Edwards, Bruce \(Protected\)](#); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); [Tregurtha, James \(Protected\)](#); [Knudson, Dean \(Protected\)](#); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** RE: EPBC Cab sub [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]  
**Date:** Thursday, 8 February 2018 2:57:12 PM  
**Attachments:** [Attachment A - Cabinet Submission - comments - 20180208.docx](#)  
**Importance:** High

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s22

Please find attached the working draft with track changes and comments.

Cheers

s22

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 8 February 2018 1:37 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); Caruso, Daniel (Protected); Tregurtha, James (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** EPBC Cab sub [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Hi s22

s34(1)(c)

s34(1)(c)

# s34(1)(c)

I've asked the team to also dig out a version that shows changes in 'track-changes'. The tweaks were fairly minor but this might be helpful. s22 will send you that version shortly - it needs some editing as it currently includes internal dept formatting comments that may be confusing.

We'll submit the brief and sub via PDMS shortly but this copy may allow you to start progressing. Please let me know if you need anything further at this stage.

Bruce

**Bruce Edwards**

Assistant Secretary

Policy and Reform Branch

Department of the Environment and Energy

T 02 6274 1877 M s22

[bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au)

Cab sub:

<< File: Attachment A - Cabinet Submission.docx >>

Cab sub attachments:

<< File: Cabinet Submission - Attachments.docx >>

Minister brief:

<< File: MS18-900046.docx >>

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** [PRATT, Finn \(Protected\)](#); [Knudson, Dean \(Protected\)](#); [Tregurtha, James \(Protected\)](#); [Edwards, Bruce \(Protected\)](#); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** Draft ToR: Interaction between Agriculture and EPBC Act [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]  
**Date:** Friday, 9 February 2018 4:24:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [9 Feb 2018\\_DRAFT ToRs\\_EPBC Act Agriculture Review.docx](#)

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Hi s22

s34(1)(c)

s34(1)(c)

Below are Talking Points to support the Minister's discussion with Minister Littleproud tonight as well as a biography of the proposed Independent Reviewer Wendy Craik.

Kind Regards

s22

s22

**Assistant Director - Environment Protection Regulatory Policy Section**

Policy and Reform Branch | Department of the Environment and Energy

s22 [@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au) | GPO BOX 787 Canberra ACT 2600 | Phone s22

**Talking Points:**

- Farmers will benefit from a targeted review aimed at reducing barriers to economic growth due to the EPBC Act.
- This independent non-statutory review can be completed quickly and will specifically focus on the immediate concerns of farmers.
- I would be interested in your views on the draft Terms of Reference for this review and the Independent Reviewer
- My Department has consulted with the Department of Agriculture and Water on the Terms of Reference.
- I am advised your Department is supportive of the Terms of Reference, particularly that the scope includes consideration being given to economic growth and international trade.

*If required,*

- I am considering appointing Wendy Craik as the Independent Reviewer. She has extensive experience with the agriculture sector, having previously been the Executive Director of the National Farmers Federation, as well government policy experience.
- My Department has sought the views from the National Farmers Federation and your Department on possible candidates for the Independent Reviewer.

s22

## WENDY CRAIK

Wendy has an extensive record of executive level appointments in both the public and private sectors – most recently as a **Commissioner of the Productivity Commission** (2009 to 2014). Prior to this, Wendy was CEO of the Murray Darling Basin Commission for four years. From 1995 to 2000, Wendy was **Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation**.

Wendy's wide-ranging board experience includes her current roles as Chair of the Climate Change Authority, **Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation**, Deputy Chancellor for the University of South Australia (2010 – 2018), Chair of the NSW Marine Estate Management Authority and **Member Advisory Board for the Centre for Strategy and Governance**. Her previous roles include: President of the National Competition Council, **board member for Dairy Australia, Chair of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council**.

Wendy was awarded a Federation of Australia Medal in 2001 and was subsequently appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.

Wendy holds a PhD in Zoology from the University of British Columbia. She also holds a Graduate Diploma in Management and a Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the Australian National University.

# s22

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**From:** s22

**Sent:** Tuesday, 13 February 2018 11:59 AM

**To:** Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>

**Subject:** final ToRs [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

s22 (Protected)

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**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Friday, 16 February 2018 12:25 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); Tregurtha, James (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** RE: Agriculture examples [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Thanks Bruce

Looks good.

Can we please include the following:

- A Q&A on each of the proposed immediate reforms and why each is important.
- A Q&A for 'Is forestry included in this review?'

s22

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 15 February 2018 6:54 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); Knudson, Dean (Protected); Tregurtha, James (Protected); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** Agriculture examples [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Hi s22

s34(1)(c)

Bruce

<< File: Talking Points - Agriculture examples - 14 Feb.docx >>

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)  
**Date:** Thursday, 15 February 2018 4:55:32 PM  
**Attachments:** s34(1)\_Coords.pdf  
[Coords Batch 1.pdf](#)  
[Coords Batch 2.pdf](#)  
[Coords Batch 3.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

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Hi s22

FYI – s22 says he will respond soon. CLO chasing it by 5.

s22 and s22 has this as well. Sending to you for line of sight.

Apologies for timing.

Happy to discuss.

s22

s22

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Environment Standards Division

Department of the Environment

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**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Thursday, 15 February 2018 4:43 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected); Cabinet Liaison (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)  
**Importance:** High

Dear s22

I'm writing seeking written MO approval to release the submission as final. This is a procedural requirement for us to proceed to Cabinet.

Could you please reply to this email as soon as possible and I will advise our Cabinet team to proceed.



All coord comments have been received and are attached s34(1)(c)

In summary:

s34(1)(c)

Happy to discuss

s22

s22

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Please consider our environment before printing this e-mail

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)  
**Date:** Friday, 16 February 2018 4:13:35 PM  
**Attachments:** s34(1)(c)

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Just to close the loop

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**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Friday, 16 February 2018 12:08 PM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Hi s22

This is the version that was sent. If you want to see the final that is distributed, s22 should have it (I can arrange if needed).

Cheers

s2

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**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 13 February 2018 2:34 PM  
**To:** Cabinet Liaison (Protected)  
**Cc:** s22 (Protected); Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Subject:** s34(1)(c)

Hi s22

s34(1)(c)

Could you please send it to the below agencies (known contacts provided too):

- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet – s22
- Department of Industry, Innovation and Science – s22
- Office of Best Practice Regulation – s22
- Department of Agriculture and Water Resources – s22
- Attorney-General's Department – s22
- Department of Finance – s22

- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade – s22 .
- Treasury.
- Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities.

As you know, s34(1)(c) so could you please request comments back from agencies by when you think we should have the comments back by to meet the cabinet timeframes?

Thanks

s22

Policy and Reform Branch

Environment Standards Division

Department of the Environment and Energy

(02) 6274 s22



**Australian Government**

**Department of the Environment and Energy**

**s34(1)(c)**

**s334(1)(c)**

s22

s34(3)

s22

s22

**S34(1)(c)**



**S34(1)(c)**

**S34(1)(c)**

s22

s22

s34(1)(c)

s22

**s334(1)(c)**

Minister	Key Messages	Interest
s22		
s34(1)(c)		
s22		

s22

s22



s22

s22

Data on the interaction of key sectors with the EPBC Act

s34(1)(c)

- Together, these key sectors account for 40 per cent of all referrals for environmental approval under the EPBC Act since its commencement.

Sector	Number of referrals since 1999	Percentage of all referrals since 1999
Agriculture	75	1.2
s22		
Total	5956	100

**From:** s22 (Protected)  
**To:** [Edwards, Bruce \(Protected\)](#); s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** [Tregurtha, James \(Protected\)](#); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** RE: Ag review media release [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]  
**Date:** Monday, 19 March 2018 11:08:10 AM  
**Attachments:** [13 March Terms of Reference Agriculture Review.docx](#)

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Hi s22

Bruce has asked me to also provide you with a copy of the Terms of Reference (attached).

Please note that we are in the process of updating the format so it is suitable for public release.

Kind Regards

s22

**Assistant Director - Environment Protection Regulatory Policy Section**  
Policy and Reform Branch | Department of the Environment and Energy  
s22 [@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au) | GPO BOX 787 Canberra ACT 2600 | Phone 02 6274 s22

---

**From:** Edwards, Bruce (Protected)  
**Sent:** Monday, 19 March 2018 10:41 AM  
**To:** s22 (Protected)  
**Cc:** Tregurtha, James (Protected); s22 (Protecte

d); s22 (Protected); s22 (Protected)  
**Subject:** FW: Ag review media release [SEC=PROTECTED, DLM=Sensitive:Cabinet]

Hi s22

Please find attached the draft media release for the Ag review. Also attached are some initial TPs/Q&As. We haven't finished working on these and my thoughts are that they need to be tightened. Please treat as draft only. As we continue to tweak please share any thoughts you have on the areas to cover (one area for example is to explain more why Ag is different and needs special attention).

s34(1)(c)

s34(1)(c)

s34(1)(c)

Bruce

<< File: 180319 Talking Points.docx >> << File: Option 2\_Agriculture review MR\_ Reviewer\_ 19  
March 10 am.docx >>  
<< File: Attachment B - Key messages.docx >>

REVIEW OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY  
CONSERVATION ACT 1999 AND AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Australian Government recognises that the sustainable development of a productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vital to our economy and regional communities, and is committed to reducing barriers to its growth.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) promotes the ecologically sustainable use of natural resources, and provides a regulatory framework to manage and protect matters of national environmental significance.

The Review is to examine the interaction between the EPBC Act and the agriculture and food production sector in order to identify regulatory and non-regulatory improvements to assist this sector while maintaining environmental standards.

The Review will be carried out by an independent person with relevant experience in the agricultural industry, law and public administration. The Review will:

- 1) Undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and areas of potential efficiencies.
- 2) Provide an overview of the appropriateness of current regulatory settings of the EPBC Act in regard to their impact on the agriculture and food production sector with consideration to the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 3) Outline options to improve how the agriculture and food production sector is regulated under the EPBC Act and reduce the regulatory burden faced by farmers and applicants, including but not limited to:
  - a. Making recommendations in relation to environmental referrals, assessment and approval requirements, and listing and delisting processes for species and ecological communities under the EPBC Act;
  - b. Identify opportunities for harmonisation between the EPBC Act and each state and territories' native vegetation management regimes; and
  - c. Identify opportunities to enhance the EPBC Act to support agriculture and food production to take advantage of domestic and international demand for sustainable agriculture, such as certification schemes and 'clean and green' foods.
- 4) In making recommendations and advising on new initiatives, take into account the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 5) As far as possible, consider the costs and benefits of the recommendations as required by the Australian Government. See guidance at [www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note](http://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note).
- 6) Consider relevant material including the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report on the Regulation of Australian Agriculture, the *Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper* and *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*.
- 7) Provide a report to Government by [mid 2018].



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

[XX] March 2018

**FINDING WAYS TO SUPPORT FARMERS UNDER  
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW**

I am pleased to announce that I have asked Dr Wendy Craik to undertake a short-term review to find practical ways to improve our farmers' interactions with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting our productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector. It is vital to Australia's growing economy and our thriving regional communities.

Australia's world class environmental standards are built on effective environmental regulation. But understanding how local, state and national environmental laws intersect can be confusing, and navigating the requirements of national environmental law can be complex.

The short-term review will unpack the issues faced by farmers and find practical ways to make things easier, while maintaining high environmental standards. Farmers are often small family businesses, working hard to look after the land. They need regulatory arrangements with clear and sensible rules that are easy to navigate. It will also help to identify ways that may be beneficial to other sectors of the regulated community.

Dr Craik will bring extensive experience in both the public and private sector including in her current role as the Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. Previously, Dr Craik was the Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation, President of the National Competition Council, board member for Dairy Australia and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.

I have asked Dr Craik to provide me with a final report by mid 2018.

In the meantime, I have established a dedicated 1800 803 772 number for farmers to speak directly to expert Departmental staff if they need help, and my Department is working with farming groups to develop advice for farmers that is in plain English and is relevant to everyday farming.

I know there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act. There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019. The statutory review will include extensive consultation and will consider the extent to which the objects of the Act have been achieved.

In the interim, the Government will continue to look for ways to improve environmental law. Further information, including the Terms of Reference for the Review, is available at: [\[link TBA\]](#).

Media Contact: Kane Silom – Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP – 02 6277 7920

**Ends**



**Cabinet in Confidence**

**Talking Points – Review of the Agriculture and Food Production Sector**

**General talking points**

- Agricultural land owners are important stewards of Australia’s unique environment.
- The Australian Government is committed to supporting our agriculture sector and working with land owners to maintain high environmental standards.
- The Australian Government recognises that a productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vital to our economy and key to developing thriving regional communities.
- Farmers are often small family businesses, working hard to look after the land. They need clear regulatory arrangements with clear and sensible rules that are easy to navigate.
- This short-term targeted review will unpack the issues faced by ‘mum and dad’ farmers to find practical ways to make their interaction with national environmental law easier, while maintaining the high environmental standards Australia is renowned for.

**If asked...**

**Review details**

*What is the problem with the agriculture sector?*

- Farmers are telling us they are having trouble understanding and meeting EPBC Act requirements. They are confused about when the EPBC Act applies, and find it complex and difficult to interact with.
- Farmers need clear and sensible rules that are easy to navigate so they can carry out their business in an environmentally sustainable way.
- This targeted review will help unpack the issues farmers are facing and find practical ways to help them more easily interact with national environmental law.

*Does this review apply to the whole agriculture sector?*

- The intent of the review is to look at the interaction between agricultural operations and the EPBC Act to identify ways to help them conduct their operations sustainably. The review may recommend regulatory or non-regulatory improvements.

*My project is currently under assessment – will it be affected?*

- Projects currently under assessment will not be impacted.
- The review will recommend ways to improve how the agriculture and food production sector is regulated under the EPBC Act going forward.

*How and why was Dr Wendy Craik appointed?*

- Dr Wendy Craik is one of Australia’s leading independent public policy advisors, particularly on issues related to natural resource management.

Commented [A1]: •[Reduce barriers to economic growth – I ve removed this comment, I can t find that within the ToR anywhere  
•Sector level impacts secondary

- Dr Craik will bring extensive experience in both the public and private sector including in her current role as chair of the Australian Rural Leadership foundation.
- Dr Craik is appropriately qualified and experienced within the agricultural sector and is already well versed in the key issues facing small farming businesses across Australia.
- Dr Craik is a past Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation and Chair of the Rural Advisory Council and, in 2001, was awarded a Federation of Australia Medal for her services to the natural resource sector and contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia. Dr Craik will be supported by the team at AITHER consultancy to conduct the review.

*What are the terms of reference and how were they decided?*

- The Government has agreed the terms of reference, which are available at [XX](#).
- The review is about understanding the challenges that ordinary family farms face with complex environmental regulatory requirements.

The review will aim to get to the bottom of the issues that need fixing and ensure requirements are fair and reasonable. *What is the consultation process / will I be able to provide my view?*

- The Government has commissioned this review to find practical ways to improve farmers' interactions with the EPBC Act and find real solutions to problems.
- The review is being conducted independently of the Department by Dr Wendy Craik with support from the consultancy, AITHER.
- A consultation strategy will be developed by Dr Craik, guided by her expertise and experience with agricultural sector engagement.
- This is a targeted review. The consultation strategy will ensure that the review adequately captures meaningful feedback from these stakeholders.
- Ways to provide input into the review will be made available on the Department's website.
- The Department will consult more broadly on a range of EPBC Act issues during the next statutory review of the Act, due to commence by late 2019.

*Why are you doing this review now when the EPBC Act review is coming up?*

- This is a targeted, smaller scale review to unpack issues our farmers are facing now when interacting with the EPBC Act, so we can develop meaningful, practical solutions to these operational problems in a way that does not lower environmental standards.
- The Government will implement the reviews findings in the second half of 2018 to ensure that farmers reap the benefits as soon as possible.
- More long-term findings and recommendations from the review may be used to inform the upcoming statutory review of the EPBC Act, which is due to commence by late 2019.

*What will happen to the findings of the review?*

- The Government will start implementing the findings of the review in the second half of 2018. This is the most direct way to deliver results for farmers as soon as possible.
- More long-term findings and recommendations from the review may be used to inform the upcoming statutory review of the EPBC Act, which is due to commence by late 2019.

**Agriculture sector / farmers**

*We build a reputation on having high environmental standards / green credentials. Will this review affect that and our exportability?*

**Commented [A2]:** After meeting Friday, this would be more in reference to Agribusiness, not mum and dad farmers. May still be asked.

- This targeted review will not negatively impact on Australian farmers' green credentials.
- The Government is focussed on helping the agriculture sector by minimising economic barriers to agricultural development, while ensuring we maintain our high environmental standards.

*Where can I get help right now? / I'm a farmer and cannot wait until your review is finished*

- We have set up a new 1800 number for farmers to contact departmental experts directly. Please call 1800 803 772

**Commented [A3]:** We haven't done this yet as far as I'm aware

*Will the reviewer actually talk to small farming businesses? Will we be drowned out by agribusiness?*

- The review will target small operations within the agricultural sector, with the aim of making things easier for 'mum and dad' farmers.

*Is this going to interfere with our requirements under state and territory laws?*

- Native vegetation management is predominantly controlled by state and territory governments.
- Approval under the EPBC Act is only required for actions that will have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance, with routine land management and other practices undertaken by farmers exempt under the Act if they are a lawful continuation of historical practices.
- As such, some activities into the future will still require approval under both Commonwealth and state and territory regulatory regimes.
- This review will take a look at duplication issues raised by stakeholders and endeavour to find a meaningful pathway through regulation to streamline assessment processes.

*Will the review address forestry concerns?*

- The vast majority of forestry operations do not need EPBC Act approval as they are managed by state governments through Regional Forest Agreements.

*Why can't we just get rid of / be exempt from the EPBC Act?*

- Most agricultural land owners see themselves as important stewards of Australia's unique environment and support legal protections for important plants and animals.
- The Australian Government, through the EPBC Act, aims to balance protecting matters of national environmental significance and cultural value with our society's economic and social needs. It does this by creating a legal framework and decision-making process based on the guiding principles of ecologically sustainable development.

- The overall benefits to the community of appropriately designed environmental protection regulation are greater than the costs. Regulation avoids expensive future rehabilitation costs to the community that far outweigh early prevention costs.

#### **Environmental NGOs**

*Why are farmers getting special treatment when land clearing for agriculture is one of the biggest threats to the environment?*

- Agricultural land owners are important stewards of Australia's unique environment. The Department supports sensible self-regulation and is committed to helping land owners to better understand if they have obligations under the EPBC Act.
- In general, the states regulate land clearing. However, land clearing can also have significant impacts on matters protected under the EPBC Act, including the Great Barrier Reef or nationally listed threatened species.
- The Commonwealth only regulates development that is likely to result in a significant impact on matters protected under the EPBC Act.
- This review will investigate the real issues around regulation of landclearing and help small-scale agricultural operations understand their requirements under the EPBC Act when clearing land.

*Why is the Australian Government committed to destroying the environment? We need tighter regulations not softer ones.*

- The Australian Government, through the EPBC Act aims to balance protecting matters of national environmental significance and cultural value with our society's economic and social needs.
- Through this review we are working to reduce regulatory burden whilst maintaining our high standard of environmental protection.

*Why not spend the money for this review on education programs to help farmers understand their requirements?*

- This review is needed to better understand the type and range of issues farmers are facing in their interactions with the EPBC Act, and then to find practical ways to help them, which may include education programs.

#### **What about me / others sectors / special treatment**

*Why is this review focusing on the agriculture sector? / What about my sector?*

- The Australian Government recognises the important role farmers play as stewards of the land.
- The Government wants to work in partnership with stakeholders to improve the regulatory system. This is an example of that principle in action.
- We are trying to methodically investigate all parts of the EPBC Act and interactions with our regulated community.
- A review of the agricultural sector is the first such review and doesn't mean we won't be carrying out similar investigations into other sectors down the track.

**Commented [A4]:** *The resources sector is hugely beneficial to the country – why can't we have concessions?*

- This review provides an opportunity to better understand the operating environment of the agriculture sector, and identify mutual benefits that may be able to be extended to others sectors of the regulated community.

*Can the findings and recommendations be applied to other industries?*

- This review provides an opportunity to better understand the operating environment of the agriculture sector, and identify mutual benefits that may be able to be extended to others sectors of the regulated community.

**Commented [A5]:** Will there be ramifications for the CSG industry with agriculture changes?

s22 (Protected)

---

**From:** Media <Media@environment.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 3:19 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Cc:** ARENA\_Media; s22  
**Subject:** FW: FOR INFO: Update on the EPBC Ag review [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]  
**Attachments:** 180319 Talking Points\_key points for MO.docx; Agriculture review MR\_20 March.docx; 13 March\_ Terms of Reference Agriculture Review.docx

Hi s22

Attached for your information are the TPs and a draft media release provided to the office yesterday evening in PDMS. Apologies that the media materials were included in the brief from the policy area rather than coming via media team to you.

Please note that we have amended the line about the phone line in the attached draft release but otherwise it is the same as that provided in the brief.

We understand that the Minister is likely to make the announcement about the review on Thursday.

Regards,

s22 | Media  
Media and Strategic Communications  
Communications, Innovation and Partnership Branch  
Department of the Environment and Energy  
P: 02 6274 s22 M: s22  
E: s22 @environment.gov.au

**Note to media: Unless otherwise agreed, the information contained in this email is for background and is not for attribution.**



The Department of the Environment acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

## Talking Points – Review of the Agriculture and Food Production Sector

### Key Messages

- The Australian Government recognises that farmers are important stewards of Australia's unique environment, who contribute to our economic growth and social fabric.
- Farmers are often small family businesses, working hard to look after the land. They are having trouble understanding when the EPBC Act applies to them, and find it complex and difficult to deal with.
- This short-term targeted review will unpack the issues faced by land holders to find practical ways to make their interaction with national environmental law easier, while maintaining the high environmental standards Australia is renowned for.

### *Why are you doing a review focused only on the agriculture sector?*

- The agriculture sector has a large number of small businesses that are trying to understand the EPBC Act. Farmers are telling us they are confused about when the EPBC Act applies, and find it complex and difficult to interact with.
- This targeted review will help unpack the issues farmers are facing and help us find practical ways to assist them more easily understand how to interact with national environmental law.

### *Will outcomes from this review lower environmental standards?*

- The review aims to deliver meaningful, practical solutions to these operational problems in a way that does not lower environmental standards.

### *What will the review deliver?*

- The Government has commissioned this review to find practical ways to improve farmers' interactions with the EPBC Act and find real solutions to their problems.
- The review aims to deliver meaningful, practical solutions to these operational problems in the short-term, in a way that does not lower environmental standards.

### *How can I become involved?*

- Ways for farmers and key agricultural stakeholders to provide input into the review will be made available on the Department's website.
- The Department will consult more broadly on a range of EPBC Act issues during the next statutory review of the Act, due to commence by late 2019.

### *Why are other sectors not included in this review?*

- I know there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community, on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act.
- There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019.

- In the interim, the Government will continue to work in partnership with stakeholders to improve the regulatory system and look for ways to improve environmental law.

*How does this review link to the upcoming statutory review of the EPBC Act?*

- This is a targeted, smaller scale review to unpack issues our farmers are facing now when interacting with the EPBC Act.
- Recommendations related to broad scale reforms will be considered as part of the next statutory review of the EPBC Act, due to commence by late 2019.





**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
Minister for the Environment and Energy

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

[XX] March 2018

### **FINDING WAYS TO SUPPORT FARMERS UNDER NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW**

I am pleased to announce that I have asked Dr Wendy Craik to undertake a short-term review to find practical ways to improve our farmers' interactions with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting our productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector. It is vital to Australia's growing economy and our thriving regional communities.

Australia's world class environmental standards are built on effective environmental regulation. But understanding how local, state and national environmental laws intersect can be confusing, and navigating the requirements of national environmental law can be complex.

The short-term review will unpack the issues faced by farmers and find practical ways to make things easier, while maintaining high environmental standards. Farmers are often small family businesses, working hard to look after the land. They need regulatory arrangements with clear and sensible rules that are easy to navigate. It will also help to identify ways that may be beneficial to other sectors of the regulated community.

Dr Craik will bring extensive experience in both the public and private sector including in her current role as the Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation. Previously, Dr Craik was the Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation, President of the National Competition Council, board member for Dairy Australia and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.

I have asked Dr Craik to provide me with a final report by mid 2018.

**In the meantime, farmers can contact expert departmental officers on 1800 803 772 if they need help,** and my Department is working with farming groups to develop advice for farmers that is in plain English and is relevant to everyday farming.

I know there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act. There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019. The statutory review will include extensive consultation and will consider the extent to which the objects of the Act have been achieved.

In the interim, the Government will continue to look for ways to improve environmental law. Further information, including the Terms of Reference for the Review, is available at: [\[link TBA\]](#).

Media Contact: Kane Silom – Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP – 02 6277 7920

**Ends**

**From:** s22  
**To:** [Edwards, Bruce](#)  
**Cc:** [Knudson, Dean](#); [Tregurtha, James](#); s22  
**Subject:** RE: Ag review prep update [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]  
**Date:** Monday, 26 March 2018 10:00:21 AM

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Announcement now scheduled for Thursday!

Will get back to you with draft MR, etc when settled.

Thanks

s22

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**From:** Edwards, Bruce  
**Sent:** Monday, 26 March 2018 9:58 AM  
**To:** s22 @environment.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Knudson, Dean <Dean.Knudson@environment.gov.au>; Tregurtha, James <James.Tregurtha@environment.gov.au>; s22 @environment.gov.au>; s22 @environment.gov.au>; s22 @environment.gov.au>; s22 @environment.gov.au>

**Subject:** Ag review prep update [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Good morning s22

This is a quick update on the arrangements we are putting in place in preparation for the EPBC Ag review announcement on Wednesday. We have the following material in development or already drafted:

- *Media Release* – with the MO: Feedback on latest draft sent last week.
- *Ministerial Talking points* – with the MO
- *Terms of Reference* – Finalised, comms to convert into Departmental pdf
- *Departmental Website (including FAQs)* – material about the review including the ToR and Media Release ready to publish as soon as the announcement has been made.
- Brief MS18-000358 – *Ministerial Letter thanking Reviewer for undertaking review and setting expectations*- expected to be with MO this afternoon.
- *QTB* - Wednesday 28/3 is the last sitting day until April, so we are mindful a QTB may need to be prepared.

I sent some suggested edits to you on the Media Release last Tuesday evening. One of the changes was to adjust '30 June 2018' as the end date to 'mid 2018'. **Can you let me know the final date** that will be included as we need to finalise a PDF version of the ToR to be published that will also include the date. As flagged last week, if it needs to be 30 June still we'll of course put that in, but the delay in commencement means that date may now be aspirational so we may need to manage expectations on the back end of the process.

**Can you also send through** the final of the Media Release so we have the latest.

Behind the scenes we are also working to progress arrangements to contract Wendy/Aither. Hope to have them on deck by next week following the announcement. We continue to update PM&C and the Ag Department who are watching closely. We'll also do some prep on points to support departmental outreach to some of the green NGOs once an announcement has been made – this is to get on the front foot and explain what the review is (and what it's not) to reduce the risk of criticism.

Grateful for feedback on the points bolded above and let me know if there is any further material you need during the week.

Bruce

**Bruce Edwards**

Assistant Secretary

Policy and Reform Branch

Department of the Environment and Energy

T 02 6274 1877 M **s22**

[bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au)

The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

s22

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 1:14 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Cc:** Edwards, Bruce  
**Subject:** RE: Contact details [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s22

Here are the contact details:

NFF President  
Ms Fiona Simson  
E: [fsimson@nff.org.au](mailto:fsimson@nff.org.au)  
M: s47F

NFF Chief Executive  
Mr Tony Mahar  
E: [tmahar@nff.org.au](mailto:tmahar@nff.org.au)  
M: s47F

Wendy Craik  
E: [wcraik1@tpg.com.au](mailto:wcraik1@tpg.com.au)  
M: s47F

Thanks

s22

---

**From:** Edwards, Bruce  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 11:17 AM  
**To:** s22 <[REDACTED]@environment.gov.au>; s22 <[REDACTED]@environment.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Contact details [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Will get back with the NFF details. I think the Minister already has Wendy's number as he phoned her in his mobile the other week after Cabinet. We will try to get it though.

B

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Mar 2018, at 10:05 am, s22 <[REDACTED]@environment.gov.au> wrote:

In case the Minister wishes to contact tomorrow, can you please provide me with mobile numbers for:

Wendy Craik  
Fiona Simson  
Tony Mahar

Please provide by 3pm.

Thanks

---

s22

**Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP**

Minister for the Environment and Energy | Federal Member for Kooyong

4 Treasury Place, East Melbourne VIC 3002 | p: s22

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 | p: s22

e: s22@environment.gov.au | w: [www.joshfrydenberg.com.au](http://www.joshfrydenberg.com.au)

# s22

---

**From:** s22

**Sent:** Wednesday, 28 March 2018 8:41 AM

**To:** s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)>

**Cc:** Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)>; s22

<[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)>; s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)>; s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)>

**Subject:** FW: Ag review updated talking points and word version of Terms of Reference [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

s22

Here is the most recent version of the ToR as requested. Please note this version states that the final report will be provided mid-year (rather than 30 June).

Regards,

s22

Assistant Director  
Regulatory Policy Section | Environment Standards Division | Department of the Environment and Energy

Ph: (02) 6275 s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)>

---

**From:** s22

**Sent:** Wednesday, 28 March 2018 8:30 AM

To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Ag review updated talking points and word version of Terms of Reference [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s22 [redacted]

Please send most up to date TOR.

Thanks

s22 [redacted]

---

From: s22 [redacted]

Sent: Monday, 19 March 2018 1:11 PM

To: s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>

Cc: Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>; Tregurtha, James <James.Tregurtha@environment.gov.au>; s22 [redacted] <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>

Subject: Ag review updated talking points and word version of Terms of Reference [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s22 [redacted]

Further to your discussion with Bruce earlier today, attached are updated talking points. Also attached is the word version of the Terms of Reference. As s22 [redacted] mentioned in her previous email, we are in the process of updating the format so it is suitable for public release and will send you an updated version as soon as this is ready.

As always, please get back to us with any thoughts on these.

Thanks,

s22 [redacted]

[redacted]  
Director  
Environment Protection - Regulatory Policy  
Policy Reform Branch | Environment Standards Division  
Department of the Environment and Energy  
GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601  
T: +61 2 6274 s22 [redacted]  
[redacted]@environment.gov.au

Please consider our environment before printing this e-mail





## Review of the interaction between the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and agriculture and food production

### Terms of reference

The Australian Government recognises that the sustainable development of a productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vital to our economy and regional communities, and is committed to reducing barriers to its growth.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) promotes the ecologically sustainable use of natural resources, and provides a regulatory framework to manage and protect matters of national environmental significance.

The Review is to examine the interaction between the EPBC Act and the agriculture and food production sector, in order to identify regulatory and non-regulatory improvements to assist this sector while maintaining environmental standards.

The Review will be carried out by an independent person with relevant experience in the agricultural industry, law and public administration. The Review will:

1. Undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and areas of potential efficiencies.
2. Provide an overview of the appropriateness of current regulatory settings of the EPBC Act in regard to their impact on the agriculture and food production sector with consideration to the objects of the EPBC Act.
3. Outline options to improve how the agriculture and food production sector is regulated under the EPBC Act and reduce the regulatory burden faced by farmers and applicants, including but not limited to:
  - a. making recommendations in relation to environmental referrals, assessment and approval requirements, and listing and delisting processes for species and ecological communities under the EPBC Act;
  - b. identifying opportunities for harmonisation between the EPBC Act and each state and territories' native vegetation management regimes; and
  - c. identifying opportunities to enhance the EPBC Act to support agriculture and food production to take advantage of domestic and international demand for sustainable agriculture, such as certification schemes and 'clean and green' foods.
4. In making recommendations and advising on new initiatives, take into account the objects of the EPBC Act.
5. As far as possible, consider the costs and benefits of the recommendations as required by the Australian Government. See guidance at [pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note](http://pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note).
6. Consider relevant material including the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report on the Regulation of Australian Agriculture, the *Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper* and *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*.
7. Provide a report to Government by mid 2018.



## Review of the interaction between the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and agriculture and food production

### Terms of reference

The Australian Government recognises that the sustainable development of a productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vital to our economy and regional communities, and is committed to reducing barriers to its growth.

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The Review is to examine the interaction between the EPBC Act and the agriculture and food production sector, in order to identify regulatory and non-regulatory improvements to assist this sector while maintaining environmental standards.

The Review will be carried out by an independent person with relevant experience in the agricultural industry, law and public administration. The Review will:

- 1) Undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and areas of potential efficiencies.
- 2) Provide an overview of the appropriateness of current regulatory settings of the EPBC Act in regard to their impact on the agriculture and food production sector with consideration to the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 3) Outline options to improve how the agriculture and food production sector is regulated under the EPBC Act and reduce the regulatory burden faced by farmers and applicants, including but not limited to:
  - a. Making recommendations in relation to environmental referrals, assessment and approval requirements, and listing and delisting processes for species and ecological communities under the EPBC Act;
  - b. Identify opportunities for harmonisation between the EPBC Act and each state and territories' native vegetation management regimes; and
  - c. Identify opportunities to enhance the EPBC Act to support agriculture and food production to take advantage of domestic and international demand for sustainable agriculture, such as certification schemes and 'clean and green' foods.
- 4) In making recommendations and advising on new initiatives, take into account the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 5) As far as possible, consider the costs and benefits of the recommendations as required by the Australian Government. See guidance at [pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note](http://pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note).
- 6) Consider relevant material including the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report on the Regulation of Australian Agriculture, the *Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper* and *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*.
- 7) Provide a report to Government by mid 2018.

Copy to:

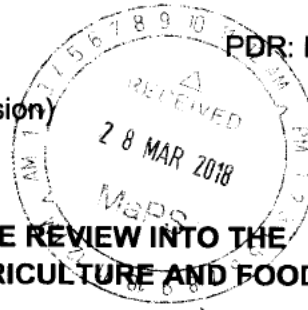
To: Minister for the Environment and Energy (For Decision)

Secretary  
Mr Cahill  
Mr Knudson  
Mr Tregurtha

CC: Assistant Minister for the Environment

Chief of Staff  
s22  
PRICE  
s22

**APPOINTMENT OF DR WENDY CRAIK TO LEAD THE REVIEW INTO THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE EPBC ACT AND AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION SECTOR**



Timing: 2 April 2018

**Recommendation:**

1. That you sign the letter to Dr Craik at **Attachment A**, thanking her for agreeing to lead the Independent Review into the Interaction between the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and the Agriculture and Food Production sector.

Signatory:

Comments:

**Signed** Not signed

Date:

28/3/18

<b>Clearing Officer:</b> Sent: 26/03/18	Bruce Edwards	Assistant Secretary, Policy and Reform, Environment Standards	Ph: 6274 1877 Mob: s22
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	s22	Director, Environment Protection Regulatory Policy	Ph: 6274 s22 Mob: s22

**Key Points:**

1. The Government recently agreed to commence an independent review into the interaction between the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the agriculture and food production sector
2. You asked Dr Wendy Craik to undertake the review. A letter thanking Dr Craik for agreeing to undertake the review is attached for your signature at **Attachment A**. The letter also provides the reviewer with the terms of reference for the review.
3. The Department is progressing arrangements to contract Dr Craik who will be supported by consulting company Aither, with whom she is affiliated. As part of the on-boarding process we will work with your office to arrange an inception meeting between the reviewer and yourself. This will be a further opportunity to outline your expectations to the reviewer.

**Risks and handling**

4. There are two clear risks at this early stage of the review process; these are discussed below with recommended handling:

- a. Timeframe to complete the review: The review was agreed as a short-term targeted process reporting to government by 30 June 2018. The delayed announcement of the review will make delivery within this timeframe challenging. The Department will ask Dr Craik and Aither to make best efforts to deliver as close as possible to the original timeframe. We will also explore with Aither the potential to brief you at least on initial findings by 30 June 2018, in advance of a final report.
  - b. Scope of engagement: The short timeframe for the review will mean the reviewer needs to carefully target consultation. This may lead to criticism where individuals or groups are not able to directly engage with the reviewer. To manage this the reviewer will design engagement with a mix of farming groups and actual farmers. This may include drawing on farming groups to channel and collect the views of members where possible. Aither have also proposed publishing a briefing note about the review so farmers can submit views in writing should they choose to do so.
5. The Department will brief you further on progress once the review is underway, including on delivery milestones agreed with the reviewer and emerging themes and risks.

### **Attachments**

- A:** Letter to Dr Craik (including terms of reference)

# REVIEW OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999 AND AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Australian Government recognises that the sustainable development of a productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vital to our economy and regional communities, and is committed to reducing barriers to its growth.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) promotes the ecologically sustainable use of natural resources, and provides a regulatory framework to manage and protect matters of national environmental significance.

The Review is to examine the interaction between the EPBC Act and the agriculture and food production sector, in order to identify regulatory and non-regulatory improvements to assist this sector while maintaining environmental standards.

The Review will be carried out by an independent person with relevant experience in the agricultural industry, law and public administration. The Review will:

- 1) Undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and areas of potential efficiencies.
- 2) Provide an overview of the appropriateness of current regulatory settings of the EPBC Act in regard to their impact on the agriculture and food production sector with consideration to the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 3) Outline options to improve how the agriculture and food production sector is regulated under the EPBC Act and reduce the regulatory burden faced by farmers and applicants, including but not limited to:
  - a. Making recommendations in relation to environmental referrals, assessment and approval requirements, and listing and delisting processes for species and ecological communities under the EPBC Act;
  - b. Identifying opportunities for harmonisation between the EPBC Act and each state and territories' native vegetation management regimes; and
  - c. Identifying opportunities to enhance the EPBC Act to support agriculture and food production to take advantage of domestic and international demand for sustainable agriculture, such as certification schemes and 'clean and green' foods.
- 4) In making recommendations and advising on new initiatives, take into account the objects of the EPBC Act.
- 5) As far as possible, consider the costs and benefits of the recommendations as required by the Australian Government. See guidance at [www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note](http://www.pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/regulation/independent-reviews-and-ris-process-guidance-note).
- 6) Consider relevant material including the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report on the Regulation of Australian Agriculture, the *Agriculture Competitiveness White Paper and Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*.
- 7) Provide a report to Government by 30 June 2018.



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY**

MS18-000358

Dr Wendy Craik  
C/- Aither  
Level 1  
2/120 Giles Street  
KINGSTON ACT 2604  
Email: [wrcraik@tpg.com.au](mailto:wrcraik@tpg.com.au)

28 MAR 2018

Dear Dr  Craik

I write to thank you for agreeing to undertake the *Review into the Interaction between the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and the Agriculture and Food Production sector*.

The agriculture and food production sector is vital to Australia's economy and regional communities. This short-term targeted review provides an opportunity to better support the sector by minimising barriers to agricultural development, while ensuring that Australia maintains the highest environmental standards.

As indicated in the terms of reference for the review attached to this letter, the Government wants to understand the type and range of issues farmers are facing in their interactions with the EPBC Act, and to find practical ways to help them.

To conduct the review, I understand you will be supported by the consultancy Aither. I anticipate that an early priority will be to conduct targeted consultation with the farming sector, and the networks that represent them, to better understand their issues and concerns about the EPBC Act.

I recognise that you will be undertaking a targeted review in a short period of time, but it will be important within these constraints to develop an approach that supports a reasonable level of engagement with farmers and provides opportunities for them to input into the process.

Building on insights from this engagement, I welcome your views on how we can help the sector engage with national environmental law more easily and efficiently and reduce their regulatory burden. I would particularly value any recommendations that can be actioned in a short timeframe.

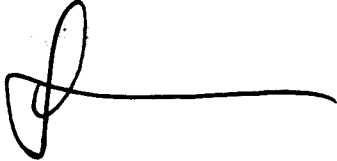
Other, more long-term findings and recommendations could potentially be used to inform the next statutory review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by late 2019.

I am eager to find improvements for the sector and start the process of reform as soon as possible and would appreciate your best efforts to deliver findings from the review with clear recommendations by the middle of the year.

If you need any assistance from my Department please contact Mr Bruce Edwards, Assistant Secretary, Policy and Reform Branch. Mr Edwards is available on 02 6274 1877 or [bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au).

I thank you for agreeing to take on this role and look forward to considering the review's findings.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'J' followed by a horizontal line that extends to the right.

JOSH FRYDENBERG

CC: Minister Price

Enc

s22

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 10 April 2018 3:00 PM  
**To:** s22  
**Subject:** Re: Non statutory review to improve farmers interaction with the EPBC Act [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi s22

s22

Just wondering if you have any feedback from Minister Price about the zag review? Our IT is not working great so you can also call me on s22 if that's easier than email.

Thanks

s22

On 6 Apr 2018, at 5:36 pm, s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)> wrote:

Hi s22

I'm traveling with the Minister now so will send try to ask her about the review.

s22

Sent from my iPhone

On 6 Apr 2018, at 5:28 pm, s22 <[s22@environment.gov.au](mailto:s22@environment.gov.au)> wrote:

Hi s22

Hope you're well. We're underway in initial planning stages for the non-statutory review to improve farmers interaction with the EPBC Act (further information on the review is below). We would be interested in knowing whether Assistant Minister Price would have views or suggestions on what regional area Wendy should visit in WA (maybe somewhere not too far from Perth?). Also does the Assistant Minister have any suggestions of groups or individual farmers that Wendy could meet with for the targeted consultation. We are having an initial planning session internally mid next week, so anything you can pass on before then would be greatly appreciated. Happy to chat further about this.

s22

Thanks,

s22

Director  
Environment Protection - Regulatory Policy  
Policy Reform Branch | Environment Standards Division



Department of the Environment and Energy  
GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601  
T: +61 2 6274 s22  
M: s22  
E: s22 @environment.gov.au

Please consider our environment before printing this e-mail

The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Energy and the Minister for Agriculture and Water have jointly announced a short-term, non-statutory Independent Review to find practical solutions to improve the way our farmers' interact with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)* (the EPBC Act).

The Independent Review will be conducted by Dr Wendy Craik who will undertake targeted consultation to understand concerns of farmers and areas of potential efficiencies. It aims to identify activities that can be practically implemented in the short-term to improve regulatory clarity for farmers, with a particular focus on:

- Helping farmers understand when their activity does (or does not) require referral, assessment or approval under the EPBC Act.
- Examining how farmers are informed and able to participate in the listing and delisting process for species and ecological communities, and the implications for them when a listing occurs.

The final report is expected to be completed by mid-2018.

Further information about the Review is available on the Department of the Environment and Energy's website at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/Agriculture-Review>.

s22

---

**Subject:** RE: Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary Red Tape For Farmers.docx

-----Original Message-----

From: s22  
Sent: Tuesday, 20 March 2018 3:38 PM  
To: Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>  
Subject: Re: Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary Red Tape For Farmers.docx [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Yes

Sent from my iPhone

> On 20 Mar 2018, at 15:17, Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au> wrote:

>

> Thanks, if possible I may come back with a few suggested edits, on first review it's not clear that we are not talking about the main statutory review of the EPBC Act. Will have a proper read and get back to you.

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: s22  
> Sent: Tuesday, 20 March 2018 2:07 PM  
> To: Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>  
> Subject: Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary Red Tape For Farmers.docx

>

>

>



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

XX March 2018

**REDUCING THE BURDEN OF UNNECESSARY RED TAPE FOR FARMERS**

The Coalition Government is seeking input from farmers and those involved in the agriculture industry on ways to cut red-tape when they interact with federal environmental law.

Supporting our productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vitally important for jobs and the growth of our economy.

Employing more than 270,000 Australians agriculture is one of our most important export industries with agriculture and food exports making up some 14 per cent or \$46.5 billion of exports in 2015.

Building on recommendation 3.3 of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the Regulation of Australian Agriculture the review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* will look at the issues faced by farmers and find practical ways to make things easier, while maintaining high environmental standards.

As outlined by the Productivity Commission it seems overly erroneous for a farmer to submit a 19 page application, an independent expert report on proposed environmental impacts, 18 detailed maps and lists of potential species on the site and likelihood of occurrence site to remove five out of 6,270 plans on a property.

Given these types of circumstances and the fact that many farmers are often small family businesses it is on governments to provide regulations which are clear, sensible and easy to navigate.

Dr Wendy Craik will undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and possible operational improvements and provide the Government with a final report by 30 June 2018. Dr Craik has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors including in her current role as the Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.

Previously, Dr Craik was the Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation, President of the National Competition Council, board member for Dairy Australia and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.

To coincide with the review the Government has also established a dedicated phone line (1800 803 772) for farmers to speak directly to expert Departmental staff if they need help. The Department is also working with farming groups to develop advice for farmers that is in plain English and is relevant to everyday farming.

The Government acknowledges there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act. There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019. The statutory review will include extensive consultation and will consider the extent to which the objects of the Act have been achieved.

In the interim, the Government will continue to look ways to improve environmental law in the short-term.

Further information, including the Terms of Reference for the Review is available via [\[insert link\]](#).

s22

**Subject:** RE: Media release suggested edits

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 8:43 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** Re: Media release suggested edits [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Will do. Moving feast with coordinating different ministers.

Let's chat tomorrow.

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Mar 2018, at 20:23, Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)> wrote:

Thanks, can you keep me up to date – we need to finalise and prep web text to support any release.

Also, PMC asked today if we were coordinating any announcement with the PMO? I assume you guys are chatting but just flagging.

b

---

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 8:15 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)>  
**Cc:** Knudson, Dean <[Dean.Knudson@environment.gov.au](mailto:Dean.Knudson@environment.gov.au)>; s22  
s22 >; Tregurtha, James  
<[James.Tregurtha@environment.gov.au](mailto:James.Tregurtha@environment.gov.au)>; s22  
s22 >  
**Subject:** Re: Media release suggested edits [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Thanks. Release now may go 4/4

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Mar 2018, at 20:13, Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)> wrote:

Hi s22

See attached some suggested edits to the draft media release. The suggestions are:

1. Changes to the fourth paragraph to make the review clearer. The early draft didn't quite explain the targeted review and left the door open to people possibly thinking this is the main statutory review or otherwise being confused.
2. Suggested replacement text for paragraph five. The original text cites a specific referral example provided to the PC by the NFF. It's very specific and the wording suggested that this is a requirement for all referrals (and that it was reported accurately). Plus it was an example provided by NFF so could fuel criticism of the farming lobby pushing to change environmental

law. I've suggested a more general way to explain the issue that has been reported that also links to the next para re small farmers needing help with clear and sensible rules.

3. In terms of the timeframe my preference is to leave it as 'mid 2018' versus 30 June. The latter is unlikely to be possible given the delay in being able to start the review. If we need to leave it as 30 June for now it's an important watch point to note that it may be aspirational (Wendy is fully occupied until early April. We'll get Aither moving ASAP but it's going to be tight).
4. I've re-worded the text re the 'dedicated hotline'. This is because public affairs pointed out that it's our general departmental 1800. Also, we've already been directing farmers (and others) to it through our work with NFF so it's not quite as 'new' as the previous wording suggested.

I hope the edits are helpful, happy to discuss and keen to stay across any updated edits (including happy to fact check of course).

Bruce

**Bruce Edwards**

Assistant Secretary

Policy and Reform Branch

Department of the Environment and Energy

T 02 6274 1877 M §22

[bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au)

The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

<Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary Red Tape For Farmers.docx>



**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
**Minister for the Environment and Energy**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

XX March 2018

**REDUCING THE BURDEN OF UNNECESSARY RED TAPE FOR FARMERS**

The Coalition Government is seeking input from farmers and those involved in the agriculture industry on ways to cut red-tape when they interact with federal environmental law.

Supporting our productive and internationally competitive agriculture and food production sector is vitally important for jobs and the growth of our economy.

Employing more than 270,000 Australians agriculture is one of our most important export industries with agriculture and food exports making up some 14 per cent or \$46.5 billion of exports in 2015.

Building on recommendation 3.3 of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the Regulation of Australian Agriculture, the Government is announcing a short-term targeted review into the interaction of agricultural landholders with the review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 will to look at the issues faced by farmers and find practical ways to make things easier, while maintaining high environmental standards.

~~As outlined by the Productivity Commission it seems overly erroneous for a farmer to submit a 19 page application, an independent expert report on proposed environmental impacts, 18 detailed maps and lists of potential species on the site and likelihood of occurrence site to remove five out of 6,270 plans on a property.~~

Understanding how local, state and national environmental laws intersect is confusing, and navigating the requirements of national environmental law can be complex. The Productivity Commission examined reports of farmers needing to invest heavily to navigate environmental regulations, completing lengthy applications and conducting detailed mapping of species only to be told they don't need approval under national law.

Given these types of circumstances and the fact that many farmers are often small family businesses it is on governments to provide regulations which are clear, sensible and easy to navigate.

Dr Wendy Craik will undertake targeted consultation to identify concerns and possible operational improvements and provide the Government with a final report by 30 Janemid 2018. Dr Craik has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors including in her current role as the Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.

Previously, Dr Craik was the Executive Director of the National Farmers' Federation, President of the National Competition Council, board member for Dairy Australia and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council. She was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.

To coincide with the review the Government has arranged access for farmers to speak directly to expert Departmental staff on ~~also established a dedicated phone line (1800 803 772. These Departmental officers can help farmers with any questions about national environmental law)~~ for farmers to speak directly to expert Departmental staff if they need help. The Department is also working with farming groups to develop advice for farmers that is in plain English and is relevant to everyday farming.

The Government acknowledges there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act. There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019. The statutory review will include extensive consultation and will consider the extent to which the objects of the Act have been achieved.

In the interim, the Government will continue to look ways to improve environmental law in the short-term.

Further information, including the Terms of Reference for the Review is available via [\[insert link\]](#).

**End**

s22

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**Subject:** FW: Ag Review Media release suggested edits  
**Attachments:** Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary....docx

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**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 21 March 2018 10:26 AM  
**To:** s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>; s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>; s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>  
**Subject:** FYI: Ag Review Media release suggested edits [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Hi s22

On behalf of Bruce, please find attached the most recent version of the EPBC/Agriculture non-statutory review Media Release, incorporating our suggestions (see below and attached).

Please note s22 has advised an updated proposed announcement date of Wednesday 4th April (was previously this Thursday).

Cheers

s22

s22

Assistant Director - Environment Protection Regulatory Policy Section  
Policy and Reform Branch | Department of the Environment and Energy  
s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au> | GPO BOX 787 Canberra ACT 2600 | Phone 02 s22

---

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 20 March 2018 8:15 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au>  
**Cc:** Knudson, Dean <Dean.Knudson@environment.gov.au>; s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>; Tregurtha, James <James.Tregurtha@environment.gov.au>; s22 <[redacted]@environment.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Re: Media release suggested edits [DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Thanks. Release now may go 4/4

Sent from my iPhone

On 20 Mar 2018, at 20:13, Edwards, Bruce <Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au> wrote:

Hi s22

See attached some suggested edits to the draft media release. The suggestions are:

1. Changes to the fourth paragraph to make the review clearer. The early draft didn't quite explain the targeted review and left the door open to people possibly thinking this is the main statutory review or otherwise being confused.
2. Suggested replacement text for paragraph five. The original text cites a specific referral example provided to the PC by the NFF. It's very specific and the wording suggested that this is a requirement for all referrals (and that it was reported accurately). Plus it was an



example provided by NFF so could fuel criticism of the farming lobby pushing to change environmental law. I've suggested a more general way to explain the issue that has been reported that also links to the next para re small farmers needing help with clear and sensible rules.

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I hope the edits are helpful, happy to discuss and keen to stay across any updated edits (including happy to fact check of course).

Bruce

**Bruce Edwards**

Assistant Secretary  
Policy and Reform Branch  
Department of the Environment and Energy

T 02 6274 1877 M s22  
[bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:bruce.edwards@environment.gov.au)

The Department acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to their elders both past and present.

<Minister Frydenberg - Media Release - Reducing The Burden Of Unnecessary Red Tape For Farmers.docx>

# s22

**From:** s22  
**Sent:** Monday, 26 March 2018 3:03 PM  
**To:** Edwards, Bruce <[Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au](mailto:Bruce.Edwards@environment.gov.au)>  
**Subject:** [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

---

s22  
**Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP**  
Minister for the Environment and Energy | Federal Member for Kooyong  
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**THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP**  
Minister for the Environment and Energy

**THE HON DAVID LITTLEPROUD MP**  
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

29 March 2018

### **WEEDING OUT UNNECESSARY RED TAPE FOR FARMERS**

- **Independent review of interaction between the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) and agriculture**
- **Farmers and those in the agricultural sector encouraged to have their say on ways to cut red-tape around federal environmental law.**
- **Dr Wendy Craik will undertake targeted consultation and provide the Government with a final report by 30 June 2018.**

Farmers and those involved in the agriculture industry are being encouraged to have their say on ways to cut red tape and make things easier around federal environmental law.

Minister for Environment and Energy Josh Frydenberg said the independent review of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) would build on recommendations outlined by the Productivity Commission's 2017 report into the Regulation of Australian Agriculture.

"The Productivity Commission's Report found it could be onerous for a farmer to understand or determine their requirements and actions to comply under the Act, with the burden of process and costs disproportionately falling on the farmer," Minister Frydenberg said.

"Farmers can also face long and uncertain timeframes – including from state and territory laws – and find it confusing and costly to determine an outcome under federal laws- in some instances unnecessarily.

"The Coalition Government is committed to making things simpler for farmers to navigate laws towards sustainable farming practices, whilst still maintaining high environmental standards."

Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources David Littleproud said his job was to get government out of farmers' lives.

"Family businesses simply trying to manage their land are drowning in paperwork," Minister Littleproud said.

"We need to make life simple for them and let them produce the best food and fibre in the world.

"We don't want sensible projects which benefit both environment and farmer to be stalled because of mountains of paperwork. We want to hear from farmers who have practical suggestions on these issues."

The Productivity Commission report points to a blueberry farmer near Coffs Harbour who wanted to clear 1.2 hectares of regrowth from his land, where state government approval was not required.

However the farmer believed he needed Commonwealth approval because the land included protected plant species and so prepared 60 pages of documents and 18 maps at great personal expense.

“It wasn’t until later the farmer found out approval was not required,” Minister Littleproud said.

“It is our job to provide regulations that are clear, sensible, and easy to navigate and harmonised across jurisdictions where practical.”

Dr Wendy Craik, former Executive Director of the National Farmers’ Federation and President of the National Competition Council, will lead the charge undertaking targeted consultation, including with key stakeholders, to pin point key concerns and possible improvements. Dr Craik will provide Government with a final report around the middle of the year.

The Department of Environment and Energy is also working with farming groups to develop advice for farmers that is in plain English and is relevant to everyday farming.

Further information on the independent review, including the Terms of Reference, is available via [\[insert link\]](#).

## Fast Facts

- **Dr Craik has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors including in her current role as the Chair of the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation.**
- **Previously, Dr Craik was also the board member for Dairy Australia and Chair of the National Rural Advisory Council.**
- **Dr Craik was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2007 for her service to the natural resource sector and for her contributions to policies affecting rural and regional Australia.**
- **The Government acknowledges there are strong views held by other industries, as well as by environment groups and the community on how best to improve the operation of the EPBC Act.**
- **There will be opportunities for all Australians to share their ideas as part of the next statutory independent review of the EPBC Act, which must commence by October 2019.**
- **s22**
- **Agriculture is an economic powerhouse, creator of almost 300,000 direct jobs and one of our most important export industries with agriculture and food exports making up some 14 per cent or \$47.2 billion of exports forecast in 2017-18.**