

BUSHPLAN AND WETLAND SITES, LEGISLATION

842. Hon. P.G. PENDAL to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to the concerns of the Canning Catchment Co-ordinating Group that the promised "environmental harm" legislation has not been enacted and ask -

- (a) does the Minister acknowledge that without the legislation, Bushplan and wetland sites continue to be at risk;
- (b) will the Minister consider going ahead with the "environmental harm" clause this session, even in the absence of other amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1986; and
- (c) if not, why not?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (a) I am committed to the implementation of Perth Bushplan and the State's Environmental Protection Policies for the protection of wetlands. An important component of their successful implementation is the introduction of a new offence of unauthorised environmental harm.
- (b) No.
- (c) The draft Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2000 was released for public comment in July this year, and over 40 submissions were received. While I am keen to progress the amendments, I do not want to compromise the outcome by ignoring the issues raised through the consultation process, some of which are related to the offence of environmental harm. I have asked the Department of Environmental Protection to meet with the key organisations and interest groups to resolve the issues, and I expect a revised draft Bill will be available later this year.