

ENVIRONMENT — STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

2551. Hon Diane Evers to the Minister for Environment:

In the Ministers response to question on notice 2277, the Minister stated that he understood that not all States and Territory Governments carry out regular State of the Environment (SoE) reporting. My question actually referred to other States and the Commonwealth, which I now ask:

- (a) is the Minister satisfied for Western Australia (WA) to be the only State in Australia which does not provide detailed SoE reports for its community:
 - (i) if yes to (a), why; and
 - (ii) if no to (a), will he reintroduce regular SoE reporting;
- (b) considering that WA contains one of only two internationally recognised biodiversity hotspots in Australia, does the Minister accept that WA should monitor the health of its environment and make such information public:
 - (i) if no to (b), why not; and
 - (ii) if yes to (b), when does he intend to do this;
- (c) considering that WA provides the Commonwealth with material for its SoE reporting, why can't this information gathering exercise be used also to produce our own SoE report that focusses on key environmental indicators and issues for WA; and
- (d) does the Minister accept that regular SoE reporting and biodiversity audits are essential for good environmental planning and sound decision making in WA:
 - (i) if yes to (d), what does the Minister intend to do about it; and
 - (ii) if no to (d), why not?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(d) I am advised that together with Western Australia, Tasmania does not currently produce a regular State of the Environment Report, instead opting to provide appropriate input and material into the Commonwealth State of the Environment Report.

Other States that produce their own State of the Environment reports do so as a statutory requirement. There are no statutory requirements under Western Australian legislation.

State of the Environment reporting is not the only avenue to monitor the health of Western Australia's environment and ensure good environmental planning and decision-making. Western Australia's Index of Biodiversity Surveys for Assessments, which was launched by the McGowan Government in June 2018, leads the country in making publicly available \$38 million worth of environmental survey and other data that has been collected to support assessments and compliance under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. This information, together with other environmental data collected by the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, increasingly underpins sound environmental and planning decisions made in Western Australia.