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| Fact sheet 24: Future reforms |

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An overview of future reforms to the Territory’s environmental protection and management framework

# Introduction

In recognition of the need to reform and modernise the Northern Territory’s (the Territory) environmental management and protection framework, the Northern Territory Government started a wide ranging environmental regulatory reform program in 2016.

Initial work has focussed on improving the Territory’s environmental impact assessment and environmental approval system for projects that may have a significant impact on the environment. This has resulted in the development of the Environment Protection Bill 2019 (the Bill).

Future reforms are intended to focus on improving the Territory’s environmental management and protection framework, and to address the:

* management of wastes and pollution
* system for managing the clearing of native vegetation
* management of the environmental impacts of mining activities.

Additional environmental protection and management measures will be incorporated into the Territory’s Environment Protection Act as a result of these future reforms.

The final result will be a single Environment Protection Act (the Act) that provides for a range of environmental protection measures and tools proportionate to the environmental risk posed by different activities.

# Reform elements

Additional environment protection and management measures that are anticipated to be incorporated into the Act through the completion of the environmental regulatory reform program include:

* a general environmental duty, placing responsibility on a person to ensure that their actions are undertaken in a manner that prevents and minimises impacts on the environment
* environmental protection policy provisions, allowing the development of environmental policy and standards required to support operational elements of the Act, e.g. the development of air quality standards
* a licensing and regulatory regime for land uses and activities which have the potential to impact the environment, including mining activities
* a framework for identifying, managing and remediating contaminated land
* provisions for the regulation of potential noise, air and water pollution.

These reforms will result in the repeal and replacement of the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998 and Litter Act 1972, and changes to the Mining Management Act 2001 and Water Act 1992.

Consultation on these reforms has started and will be continuing throughout 2019.