

**From:**  
**To:** [SPSC SPSC](#)  
**Subject:** ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2018  
**Date:** Wednesday, 19 September 2018 12:25:55 PM

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Attention: SOCIAL POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Re: ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY AMENDMENT BILL 2018

I write to comment on the proposed Bill, in my capacity as a participant in the 2004 inquiry into the establishment of an EPA for the NT.

I note that, as described, the Bill presents a set of measured, sensible administrative changes to the EPA, that allow greater flexibility and enable the Authority to take on further responsibility.

All of which would be fine, if not for two significant contextual features:

1. this set of restructuring is based on the anticipation of broadscale implementation of hydraulic fracturing across the NT - despite an exhaustive inquiry which definitively reported that:

- the vast majority of Territorian respondents strongly oppose fracking;
- no guarantees can be offered regarding the likely impact of over-consumption of our precious finite water resources on regional groundwater-dependent ecosystems;
- the likely contamination of local aquifers remains unaddressed, and must be investigated by subsequent regional assessments;
- the NT has no way of balancing the immense carbon burden fracking represents, vastly eclipsing that of the infamous Adani Charmichael coal mine, rendering it impossible for the Commonwealth to meet their international obligations towards reducing emissions (towards which the NT has recognised no responsibility)

As such, the Bill should be rejected as an unwanted step in the wrong direction

2. what would otherwise stand as measured, sensible administrative restructuring is now better recognised as pointless tinkering around the edges of an institution which has dashed its credibility on McArthur River.

The NT EPA, in its bizarre assessment report for the stage 3 expansion of McArthur River Mine, has demonstrated an antipathy for logic, reason, national professional standards and its own processes by:

- ignoring the wealth of evidence of this project's compounding environmental failure;
- turning a blind eye to the continuous, repeated significant breaches of their lax environmental requirements, which risks locking Territorians into unjust liability for those unprosecuted crimes against the environment;
- accepting unbounded, unmanageable risk, including imminent catastrophic failure of waste management infrastructure that is already bursting at the seams; and
- departing from pending efforts towards agreement on rehabilitation expectations

It is notable that none of these bizarre contortions were evident in the NTEPA's approach to the assessment process, until at the final turn this monumental failure produced a recommendation for the NT Minister for Resources to grant those determined polluters more decades at it.

This abject failure to show an appreciation of their basic responsibilities renders any proposal for minor amendments to the powers, structure and function of this rogue authority unacceptable.

I urge the parliament to reject this Bill; to reconsider their death march towards broadscale fracking of our landscapes; to reject the assessment report for yet another McArthur River expansion; and to immediately focus on the essential task of repairing the integrity of the NTEPA.

contact:  
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