

Health and Community Services Committee

Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2012-13: *Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations*

Report No. 38

Recommendation

The committee recommends that the Legislative Assembly note that it has resolved not to proceed with further examination of the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2012-2013: Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations with regard to management of national parks and protected areas.

Background

1. The Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2012-2013: *Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 30 October 2012 and referred to three portfolio committees for consideration on 6 March 2013. The report examined the implementation of recommendations made by the Auditor-General in three separate performance audits reports, tabled in Parliament in 2010.
2. On 30 July 2013, the committee agreed to commence examination of the section of the report relevant to its area of responsibility – that is, the implementation of recommendations associated with the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No. 9 for 2010: *Sustainable Management of national parks and protected areas*.
3. The committee noted that a key issue in each audit was the status of management plans in national parks. In 2010, the Auditor-General reported that management plans were in place for only 98 (17 per cent) of the 576 protected areas and recommended that the department:
Formalise a comprehensive planning process for park management plans which will:
 - (a) *provide an evaluation process to prioritise the timely completion of plans for those parks which were declared because of their significant conservation values*
 - (b) *establish a forward plan for the finalisation of the management plans for the balance of the protected areas.*
4. At that time, the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (the Act) required management plans to be prepared as soon as practicable after the dedication of a national park.
5. In 2012, the Auditor-General reported that the number of park management plans had not increased since 2010, that one hundred and twenty-nine park management plans were in draft form, and that management statements had been prepared for a further 245 protected areas, as an interim measure.

Amendment of the Nature Conservation Act 1992

6. The Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013 was passed on 29 October 2013 and amended the Act.
7. Amendments to section 111 of the Act replaced the requirement for all protected areas to have a management plan with a requirement for a management statement. Under the Act, the Minister may decide to prepare a management plan for a national park if he or she is satisfied it is appropriate.

No further examination

8. In light of the removal of the requirement to prepare management plans for all national parks from the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, the committee has resolved not to proceed with its examination of the Auditor-General's Report to Parliament No. 2 for 2012–2013: *Follow up of 2010 audit recommendations*.



Trevor Ruthenberg MP

Chair

Health and Community Services Committee

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