



## Fact sheet



# Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

If you are planning a project that might have an impact on nationally protected matters, you may need to refer it for assessment in accordance with this Act.

## 1. What approvals do I need?

A person must not take any action that potentially has a significant impact on any matters of national environmental significance specified under the [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (EPBC Act) without approval.

[Matters of national environmental significance](#) include:

- world heritage areas and national heritage places
- wetlands of international importance
- listed threatened species, ecological communities and migratory species
- Commonwealth marine areas
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- nuclear actions (including uranium mines)
- water resources (that relate to unconventional gas development and large coal mining development).

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has a [Protected Matters Search Tool](#) to identify whether a matter of national environmental significance exists in and around your project area. DCCEEW's [significant impact guidelines](#) help assess whether an activity is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance.

## 2. Who provides the approvals?

The Minister for the Environment and Water or a delegate of the Minister is responsible for deciding whether to approve an action under the EPBC Act and determine what conditions may be imposed with the approval.

This fact sheet provides general information and does not constitute legal advice. You should seek independent legal advice tailored to your individual circumstances. The Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) assists major project proponents to navigate Australian Government approval processes. The MPFA does not grant approvals, nor administer the legislation listed in this fact sheet.

## 3. How do I apply for the approvals?

If your project may impact a matter of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act, you must refer the project to DCCEEW to determine whether further assessment is required.

If an assessment is required, the impacts of the project will be evaluated in accordance with the EPBC Act's [referral and assessment](#) requirements.

A project may be assessed by the relevant state or territory government on behalf of the Australian Government under assessment bilateral agreements.

## 4. More information

### Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Further information on protecting the environment under the EPBC Act is available on the DCCEEW [website](#).

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Team from DCCEEW can be contacted by email at [EPBC.Referrals@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:EPBC.Referrals@dcceew.gov.au).

### Major Projects Facilitation Agency

If you would like assistance to identify potential Australian Government regulatory approvals required for your project, please refer to the [Major projects help tool](#) self-assessment.

The MPFA team can be contacted by email at [MPFA@industry.gov.au](mailto:MPFA@industry.gov.au).