



2020

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES
REPORT 10 – INQUIRY INTO NATURE IN OUR CITY**

**Presented by
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Minister for the Environment and Heritage**

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services (the Committee) commenced an inquiry into ‘matters affecting the value of the natural environment to an urbanising Canberra’—Nature in Our City—on 22 February 2018.

BACKGROUND

Context for the Inquiry

1.2 The Committee announced this self-referred inquiry to examine how the urban environment can best interact with the natural environment as Canberra grows into the future. As our population increases and the city develops, there are both opportunities and challenges to maintaining and integrating natural spaces within the urban environment and ensuring optimal outcomes in the city’s interaction with its surrounding natural environment. The Committee explores these issues in this report.

Acknowledging Aboriginal Perspectives on Landscape

1.3 In conducting this inquiry, the Committee acknowledged the continuing contribution of the Traditional Custodians of the land of the Canberra region, the Ngunnawal people, and more broadly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

1.4 The Committee greatly valued the opportunity to meet with staff from the Healthy Country unit within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (EPSDD) to hear a description of the history of Aboriginal people in this region, the songlines and significant sites in the Canberra landscape, and the importance of landscape and Country in the lives of Aboriginal people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government re-commit to the concept of the City in a Landscape.
Recommendation 2	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a City in a Landscape Strategy reflecting the ACT’s current and anticipated future needs.
Recommendation 3	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with the Traditional Custodians of the ACT and region to ensure the City in a Landscape Strategy incorporates cultural knowledge and traditional practices.

Recommendation 4	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consult with the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for advice on: • identifying native plants and grasses suitable for the ACT Government planting program; • traditional practices for caring for our natural environment; and • nature burns, plantings and land management and maintenance practices suitable for the region.
Recommendation 5	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, articulate the vision for the urban landscape within the ACT, including what defines quality greenspace.
Recommendation 6	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, articulate the vision for managing interfaces between urban and non-urban landscapes.
Recommendation 7	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise opportunities for wilding the city.
Recommendation 8	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise biodiversity.
Recommendation 9	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of areas within the urban area for nature play.
Recommendation 10	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of areas within the urban area for parks.
Recommendation 11	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider how best to formally recognise the significance of Canberra Nature Park.
Recommendation 12	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise public tree canopy coverage as a feature of the landscape.
Recommendation 13	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government articulate how tree maintenance, planting and replacement will occur.
Recommendation 14	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of nature corridors to link environmental areas.
Recommendation 15	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise further restoration of urban waterways.
Recommendation 16	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise green systems

	rather than discrete pieces of green infrastructure such as individual walls or roofs.
Recommendation 17	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government implement the City in a Landscape Strategy by embedding the strategy in current and future planning controls and regulations.
Recommendation 18	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider ways developers can be encouraged to undertake landscaping beyond the minimum requirements.
Recommendation 19	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government require maintenance plans for new developments to be lodged with the planning approvals to demonstrate viability and transparency of the proposals.
Recommendation 20	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government progress policy that minimises the encroachment of development on higher-value natural areas.
Recommendation 22	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to support the trial of re-wilding projects in conjuncture with the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society and other similar stakeholders.
Recommendation 22	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the Tree Protection Act 2005 to ensure best outcomes are being achieved.
Recommendation 23	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government prioritise the planting of tree species that are as adaptable to a changing climate as possible.
Recommendation 24	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the viability and appropriateness of tree species that are less adaptable to climate change.
Recommendation 25	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider how green infrastructure could be implemented in high rise developments.
Recommendation 26	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider current impediments to establishing balcony, courtyard or roof gardens.
Recommendation 27	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop, or commission, planting guides for balconies, courtyards and larger-sized yards.
Recommendation 28	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government evaluate the application of Transport Canberra and City Services standards to ensure that the best outcomes are being achieved.
Recommendation 29	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to develop urban water sensitive design guidelines through the monitoring and evaluation of past initiatives.

Recommendation 30	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government liaise with asset managers, such as ICON Water, to identify technical requirements for infrastructure and how to best balance these through the implementation of the City in a Landscape Strategy.
Recommendation 31	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government liaise with asset managers, such as ICON Water, to identify any opportunities for combined implementation of the City in a Landscape Strategy.
Recommendation 32	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop and implement a strategy that is co-designed with, and supports, volunteer environmentalists to guide and sustain community stewardship of the environment within the ACT.
Recommendation 33	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to invest in the Landcare and Parkcare programs and give consideration to longer-term funding for these.
Recommendation 34	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, in conjunction with Landcare and similar groups, consider further partnership opportunities.
Recommendation 35	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, in conjunction with Landcare and similar groups, identify and implement further opportunities for Junior Landcare and Junior Parkcare.
Recommendation 36	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider if there are opportunities for streamlined community project approvals that make it easier and less burdensome for community groups.
Recommendation 37	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government introduce a pilot scheme to enable local communities to lead, or be involved in, the design and implementation of low-cost alternative urban spaces in their neighbourhood (including ecological restoration, natural play spaces, informal pathways/cycleways, smaller areas of well-maintained dryland grass and community-based maintenance).
Recommendation 38	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to partner with research and education institutions, including primary and secondary schools, to develop and share the knowledge and expertise of environmental practice in the ACT.
Recommendation 39	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider joining the Biophilic Cities Network.
Recommendation 40	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government further strengthen the relationship and knowledge exchange between it and local universities and research institutions through increased research partnerships.

Recommendation 41	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with Friends of Grassland and other interested stakeholders to realise the potential of the North Mitchell Grasslands.
Recommendation 42	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government more broadly consider the opportunities for improving, rather than maintaining, areas of natural value.
Recommendation 43	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government prioritise the continued effort to remove weeds from impacted areas within the ACT.
Recommendation 44	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide information to the community on how to identify and respond to (known) problem weeds.
Recommendation 45	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government identify opportunities to reduce the spread of weeds as a result of current practices within the mowing regime.
Recommendation 46	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with wildlife rescuers and carers to reduce the number of injured animals needing care as well as support those animals that do need care.
Recommendation 47	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government improve the use of fine-grade fruit tree netting in the ACT.
Recommendation 48	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider undertaking further programs aimed at combatting wombat mange.
Recommendation 49	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to implement cat containment across the ACT.
Recommendation 50	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government commit to being a bee friendly city.
Recommendation 51	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a guide for gardeners to support the bee friendly city, in particular, looking at pollination corridors.
Recommendation 52	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government phase out the use of harmful pesticides and chemicals distributed or used within the ACT by government and non-government bodies as well as members of the public.
Recommendation 53	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider additional funding for maintenance of landscaped and natural environment areas, including funding to support the various fauna and flora groups in the Territory.
Recommendation 54	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government introduce a water retention scheme for recycled water to be used to maintain local green spaces.
Recommendation 55	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider including independent climate change impact analysis in the assessment of development proposals.

Recommendation 56	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop an ecotourism strategy which articulates how tourists can be attracted to engage with our natural environment.
Recommendation 57	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government invest in more environmental signage at nature reserves in the Territory to better inform visitors of safe bush etiquette.
Recommendation 58	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to investigate and promote 'Nature Prescriptions' in the ACT.

Government Response to the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services

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The Committee made 58 main recommendations which are listed below. The following table shows the Government Response to each of the recommendations. 44 recommendations are agreed, three recommendations are noted, and 11 recommendations are agreed in principle.

Recommendations	Government Response
1. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government re-commit to the concept of the City in a Landscape.	Agreed in principle. The ACT Government is already committed to a suite of strategies that deliver on the concept of City in the landscape but does not consider the need to re-commit to this. This commitment is already strong and includes the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 which refers (p4) specifically to Canberra “as a city in the landscape and the National Capital”. The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 has the following vision: <i>‘The vision of this strategy is to be a sustainable, competitive and equitable city that respects Canberra as a city in the landscape and the national capital, while being responsive to the future and resilient to change.’</i> The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 contains several strategic directions and actions aimed at achieving a compact and efficient city, which makes the best use of existing land, infrastructure and assets make Canberra a more sustainable, accessible and liveable city. The need to protect our surrounding natural environment from further encroachment by development has driven the Strategy’s focus on infill and urban densification to provide more of Canberra’s future development. The Strategy includes measures to address living infrastructure, through integrated planning for green space, vegetation and waterbodies, and for enhancing our urban tree canopy cover through future precinct, estate and district planning processes. The Strategy also addresses consideration of natural habitat and conservation areas in urban planning and design within the ACT.

Recommendations	Government Response
2. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a City in a Landscape Strategy reflecting the ACT's current and anticipated future needs.	Agreed in principle. As noted in response to recommendation 1, the ACT Government is already committed to a city in the landscape strategy through the Planning Strategy, which also outlines the current and anticipated needs for the city and sets the direction to move toward that vision. Additionally, this strategic direction is also reinforced and delivered through the collective relationship with, and directions within a suite of other government policy and strategies as noted above. While it is considered that the current strategy and policy context adequately addresses this and a new strategy is not required, it may be of assistance to provide an illustrative representation that shows the relationships of existing strategies and policy to the City in the Landscape vision.
3. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with the Traditional Custodians of the ACT and region to ensure the City in a Landscape Strategy incorporates cultural knowledge and traditional practices.	Agreed. The ACT Government is committed to engaging with the Ngunnawal community to care and manage Country together as outlined in the ACT Government's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019—2028. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement provides the whole of government framework to deliver quality of life outcomes for community. The Agreement is further supported by Directorate Action Plans. EPSDD has facilitated the establishment of the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee. Ngunnawal have self-determined the membership and functions of the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee to provide community direction and input into all aspects of the management of Country. This includes land managed by the Parks and Conservation Service and the conservation of natural and cultural values across the ACT. The Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee working with the ACT Government has: ○ established six new Ngunnawal Rangers to care for Country and assist in the flood and fire recovery of Namadgi National Park ○ during the Orroral Valley Fire identified cultural values to be protected and agreed on protective measures that were put in place to conserve these values ○ played a key and ongoing role in the recovery of the park following the fires ○ incorporated specific cultural burning areas in parks and reserves ○ supported changes to the <i>Heritage Act 2004</i> that makes provision for recognising, registering and conserving Aboriginal places and objects, and for involving Aboriginal people in decisions affecting

Recommendations	Government Response
	those places and objects. The Act protects all Aboriginal places and objects located within areas of the ACT Government's jurisdiction. ○ provided ongoing Ngunnawal community input into ACT Water Resource Plan, the Ngunnawal people have determined the objectives and outcomes to enable them to realise their cultural water rights ○ revised the Fisheries Act to include cultural fishing access for Aboriginal people, during the consultation, it became evident that access to Country and cultural resources more broadly, not only fishing, are important to the community, consequently a new section of the Nature Conservation Act was developed to allow the development Cultural Resource Management Plan with traditional custodians ○ engaged with City Renewal Authority on how Ngunnawal is recognised in the precinct. Additionally, the review of the ACT planning system currently underway may see the introduction of additional objects into the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> in relation to acknowledgement of Aboriginal culture and values and promotion of interfacing government policy. The Ngunnawal community is being engaged in the ACT Planning Review. The engagement aims to (a) develop an understanding of Ngunnawal values in relation to planning (particularly in urban areas); (b) inform Ngunnawal community members about the ACT Planning System and the review; and (c) explore opportunities to capture and embed Ngunnawal values within the planning system.
4. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consult with the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for advice on: • identifying native plants and grasses suitable for the ACT Government planting program; • traditional practices for caring for our natural environment; and	Agreed in principle. The ACT Government recognises the Ngunnawal people as the Traditional Custodians on the ACT. It is therefore important that Ngunnawal people speak for Country and provide advice in relation to the management of Country. Consultation with Traditional Custodians is being actively undertaken across directorates under the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019—2028</i> which provides the whole of government framework to deliver quality of life outcomes for community.

Recommendations	<i>Government Response</i>
• nature burns, plantings and land management and maintenance practices suitable for the region.	EPSDD has established the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee to provide an inclusive approach to engaging and partnering with Ngunnawal to conserving the environment and connecting people with nature and culture. Specifically, in responding to the committee: • identifying native plants and grasses suitable for the ACT Government planting program; EPSDD has delivered a native plant use forum in partnership with the community. • traditional practices for caring for our natural environment; and EPSDD has established the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee to progress this item. • nature burns, plantings and land management and maintenance practices suitable for the region. There is greater participation of the Ngunnawal Community in on Country environmental and cultural programs delivered in the ACT through partnering with NRM, Heritage and PCS in delivering these programs. This has included in: • Fire Management – examples include the Orroral Valley Fire and recovery program, development of the Bushfire Operations Plan • Water Management – Water Resource Plan as part of the Murray Darling process • Natural Resources Management – Management Planning for Canberra Nature Park and best of Canberra Mountain Bike experience, and development of the Molonglo special purpose reserve (Namarag nature, people culture) • Traditional Ecological Knowledge – Delivery of a native plant use forum. There is also increased focus on Traditional Custodian engagement and actions in the Draft Urban Forest Strategy and a commitment to the building of Indigenous peoples’ engagement in the management of natural resources within the Nature Conservation Strategy. In addition to seeking independent Indigenous cultural and historic heritage advice on strategic urban renewal sites, the EPSDD will work with the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee to engage with representatives of the first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians of the Canberra region.

Recommendations	Government Response
5. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, articulate the vision for the urban landscape within the ACT, including what defines quality greenspace.	Agreed. The intent is already being addressed through existing plans and strategies. In particular, the Draft Urban Forest Strategy provides a vision for a resilient and sustainable urban forest that supports a liveable city and the natural environment and contributes to the wellbeing of the community in a changing climate. This Strategy has been developed alongside the Planning Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Living Infrastructure Plan and Transport Strategy. This recognises the importance of the urban forest as part of a wider system that contributes to a liveable city and the wellbeing of the community. Furthermore, the Territory Plan’s Statement of Strategic Directions sets out high-level principles for sustainable development, spatial planning and urban design to guide development of land. This includes principles related to the urban landscape within the ACT. Strategic Directions 3 and 4 in the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 aim also to protect and improve our living infrastructure (such as trees, parks, waterways and open spaces) to strengthen our resilience to climate change, and promote development in key areas with access to parks and green spaces to provide benefits including increased physical activity, mental health and social interaction for improved liveability. A review of statutory Land Management Plans for urban open space is underway by TCCS as per the requirements of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>. Updated plans will assist in addressing recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16.
6. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, articulate the vision for managing interfaces between urban and non-urban landscapes.	Agreed. The ACT Government has well established priorities for integrating biodiversity protection into urban planning and design processes including the consideration of natural habitat and conservation. Direction 3.5 and related actions in the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 recognises that Canberra’s nature reserves and green spaces provide important habitat, biodiversity and recreation opportunities and identifies the need to continue to maintain biodiversity and improve habitat connectivity by incorporating consideration of habitat and conservation areas into urban planning and design processes. The Territory Plan’s Statement of Strategic Directions sets out high-level principles for sustainable development, spatial planning and urban design to guide development of land. This includes principles related to urban and non-urban landscapes. The requirements for managing interfaces between urban and non-urban

Recommendations		Government Response
		landscapes are set out by the relevant zoning, codes and zone objectives of the Territory Plan. Examples are the Estate Development Code and the objectives of the PRZ1 Urban Open Space Zone.
7.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise opportunities for wilding the city.	Agreed. The ACT Nature Conservation Strategy includes the aims of improving the condition of lowland native vegetation communities and increasing connectivity between patches of native vegetation, non-native vegetation in urban areas, and riverine systems. Furthermore, Action 2 in Canberra’s Living Infrastructure Plan is to achieve 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30% permeable surfaces in Canberra’s urban footprint by 2045. Collectively, and in conjunction with local community Landcare and Parkcare volunteer group restoration projects, there is commitment to, and clear opportunities for, enhancing local biodiversity and “wilding the city”. Nevertheless, wilding initiatives need to be balanced with the need for quality open space that is accessible for people of all abilities, and management of risks from fire and wildlife. City Services has a priority to maintain safety for the community.
8.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise biodiversity.	Agreed. The ACT <i>Nature Conservation Strategy 2013-23</i> is a statutory mechanism with the aim of enhancing the resilience of natural areas at the landscape scale. The vision of the Strategy is for biodiversity rich, resilient landscapes stretching from the inner city to the mountains, where well-functioning ecosystems can meet the needs of people and the environment. It also provides direction on how to better integrate and extend conservation efforts beyond reserves and cross border, to ensure ecosystems remain healthy and well managed. Many of the actions in the Strategy have been completed (refer to the ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013-23 Progress against Milestones in Implementation Plan 1 (2013-18) report), including in relation to Strategy 4: Enhance biodiversity value of urban areas. The report is online at https://www.environment.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1428364/Progress-Against-Milestones-in-Implementation-Plan-1-201318.pdf.

Recommendations		Government Response
		Specifically, the establishment of Frankland Grassland Reserve in the city is a concrete example of the Government's commitment to prioritising biodiversity in the city.
9.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of areas within the urban area for nature play.	Agreed. A Play Space Strategy currently is being developed by TCCS and will assist in addressing this recommendation. The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 promotes development in key areas with access to parks and green spaces providing benefits including increased physical activity, mental health and social interaction to improve liveability. Direction 4.2 and its actions address opportunities to deliver a range of recreation opportunities and enhance the network of accessible, high quality local urban open space to meet changing community needs. The desire for more nature play and principles for site selection and decision-making was identified by the Better Suburbs Forum with government progressively implementing this approach. The Government intends commencing construction in 2020 of a new nature space located between the Molonglo River and the suburb of Whitlam in Molonglo. The nature space will provide a unique recreational space for residents of the Molonglo Valley with walking trails, river access, Ngunnawal artwork, natural play spaces and interpretative information. The nature space is anticipated to be opened in late 2021. A review of statutory Land Management Plans for urban open space is underway by TCCS as per the requirements of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>. Updated plans will assist in addressing recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16.
10.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of areas within the urban area for parks.	Agreed. Being a well-planned city, Canberra has a network of nature reserves throughout the city. These green spaces are complemented by other open spaces such as playgrounds, parks, urban ponds and lakes, and ovals. The ACT Government is committed to improving and adding to green and open space throughout the city. For example, the ACT Government created a new nature reserve in Franklin, the Franklin Grasslands Reserve. The Government is also exploring other opportunities to add to the network of reserves known as the Canberra Nature Park.

Recommendations	<i>Government Response</i>
	In addition, the ACT Planning Strategy 2018 promotes development in key areas with access to parks and green spaces providing benefits including increased physical activity, mental health and social interaction to improve liveability. In particular, Directions 4.1 and 4.2 and related actions address opportunities to deliver a range of social infrastructure and recreation opportunities that meet community needs and support strong communities, including the future use of land for greatest public benefit and enhance the network of accessible, high quality local urban open space. The ACT Government prioritises areas for environmental offsets, nature reserves, open spaces and parks through forward planning processes such as planning for new greenfield areas and the estate development plans. The Territory Plan and Map already define Urban Open Space and identify Parks and Recreation Zones within urban areas of the ACT. The Territory Plan sets out planning objectives and requirements for these areas in the relevant zone objectives and codes. Special purpose reserves within public land also provide opportunities for limited recreation activities, such as within the parts of the Molonglo River Reserve. In the urban context, the ACT has amongst the highest areas per capita of Urban Open Space.
11.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider how best to formally recognise the significance of Canberra Nature Park. Agreed. All the 37 nature reserves of Canberra Nature Park (CNP) are protected under the Territory Plan as public land ‘nature reserves’ and are zoned as hills, ridges and buffer. They are also protected through the National Capital Open Space System in the National Capital Plan. The primary objective for these nature reserves is nature conservation. The CNP draft reserve management plan recognises this and sets out goals, objectives, policies and actions to protect the natural values of CNP whilst allowing appropriate recreational activities. The vision for CNP is that it enriches the lives and livelihood of a vibrant and healthy community, ensuring our natural and cultural heritage is valued and conserved forever. The draft CNP management plan was released for public comment in late 2019 and will be finalised in mid-2020. Canberra Nature Park value has been strongly recognised during the COVID-19 health emergency with increased visitation and use by Canberrans for health and wellbeing benefits.

Recommendations	Government Response
12. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise public tree canopy coverage as a feature of the landscape.	Agreed. The ACT Government and community value Canberra as a ‘city in the landscape’, drawing on its ‘bush capital’ and ‘garden city’ legacy. Canberra’s Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City (Plan) and the Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025 aim to achieve 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) by 2045. The Plan recognises the benefits of both native trees and exotic deciduous trees for ameliorating the effects of climate change as well as for enhanced health and wellbeing outcomes. Planting of over 17,000 trees over the next four years will assist in achieving these aims, along with increased recognition of the importance of mature native trees, the loss of which was listed in 2019 as a key threatening process under the <i>Nature Conservation Act 2014</i>. The Draft Urban Forest Strategy also gives effect to the Canberra’s living Infrastructure plan and achievement of the canopy target. Strategic Directions 3 - Sustainable and Resilient Territory, and 4 -Liveable Canberra in the ACT Planning Strategy also contain directions and actions specifically aimed at addressing opportunities for public tree canopy cover as part of integrating living infrastructure and sustainable design to make Canberra a resilient city within the landscape and to encourage high quality places, including streetscapes, for a changing climate. The National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) considers and encourages as part of its deliberations, development proposals’ contribution to the public realm, including public trees and streetscape. Advice issued by the NCDRP directly references the NCDRP Design Principles for the ACT, which identify public realm, canopy trees and streetscape as key design considerations to be addressed.
13. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government articulate how tree maintenance, planting and replacement will occur.	Agreed. The Draft Urban Forest Strategy articulates how tree maintenance, planting and replacement will occur at the strategic level.
14. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise the identification of nature corridors to link environmental areas.	Agreed. Strategy 1 in the ACT Nature Conservation Strategy approach aims to enhance habitat connectivity and ecosystem function. These are key actions to enhancing landscape resilience. As part of this, the EPSDD has incorporated wildlife habitat connectivity mapping based on CSIRO research into ACTMAPi and is using the mapping to inform on-ground woodland revegetation. Connectivity mapping data has also been integrated into the ACT Environmental Offsets Calculator. Detailed vegetation mapping has been uploaded to ACTMAPi to

Recommendations	Government Response
	assist in understanding and managing tree dieback and biodiversity refugia, and as part of reviewing and informing the Woodlands and Grasslands Conservation Strategy. Fine-scale planning across six grassy woodland restoration landscapes informed restoration plans for Belconnen Hills, Majura Valley, Callum Brae, Kowen Plateau, and Greater Goorooyarroo. The ACT Woodlands Restoration Program (2011–2018) restored and connected 60,000 hectares of the largest remaining box–gum grassy woodland landscape in Australia. This included the six aforementioned areas and sites linking the Kama Nature Reserve with the Stony Creek Tributary running into the Murrumbidgee River. Regional corridor linkages across the ACT/NSW border also have been identified and embedded into program design and project development to ensure best quality outcomes. A review of statutory Land Management Plans for urban open space is underway by TCCS as per the requirements of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>. Updated plans will assist in addressing recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16.
15. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise further restoration of urban waterways.	Agreed. This work is being undertaken as part of the Healthy Waterways Project and related investments. This project involves several initiatives to improve the water quality in ACT and region waterways: i. Construction of 20 water quality assets—raingardens, wetlands retention ponds, and channel restorations—that will filter, on average, 1900 tons of sediments, 14 tons of nitrogen and 2.4 tons of phosphorus from stormwater drainage every year. ii. A pilot public education program aimed at householders and the construction industry to reduce the amount of pollution entering the region’s waterways. iii. A program of waterway monitoring, data provision, and decision-support modelling to underpin evidence-based management of the region’s waterways by the ACT Government and other stakeholders. This work includes <i>Waterwatch</i>, an extensive community-based waterway monitoring program. iv. A program of research into the cause of algal blooms in Lake Tuggeranong and potential options for mitigating these. v. An initiative to coordinate the management of water resources among the 11 government and non-government agencies/organisations in the region whose operations have a material impact on water quality.

Recommendations	<i>Government Response</i>
	The ACT Government has provided additional investment in 2019-20 in water quality assets, public education aimed at curbing waterway pollution, urban waterway stewardship, algal bloom research and the <i>Waterwatch</i> monitoring program. As part of the Healthy Waterways initiative described above priorities for urban waterway restoration have been identified and have informed the Draft Urban Forest Strategy and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan. In addition, a draft Urban Lakes and Ponds Land Management Plan has been prepared which will assist in addressing this recommendation.
16. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, preferably as part of the City in a Landscape Strategy, prioritise green systems rather than discrete pieces of green infrastructure such as individual walls or roofs.	Agreed. The ACT Nature Conservation Strategy is based on a landscape scale approach (a system) for the whole of the ACT. The ACT Planning Strategy and Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan, which apply to the urban context, take a whole of urban footprint approach. Strategic Directions 3 - Sustainable and Resilient Territory, and 4 -Liveable Canberra in the ACT Planning Strategy contain directions and actions which recognise that Canberra's nature reserves and green spaces provide important areas of habitat for biodiversity conservation and tree canopy cover as part of integrating living infrastructure and the need to continue to maintain biodiversity assets and improve habitat connectivity through urban planning and design processes. The National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) considers and encourages as part of its deliberations, development proposals' contribution to public realm, including public trees and streetscape. Advice issued by the NCDRP directly references the NCDRP Design Principles for the ACT, which identifies public realm, canopy trees and streetscape as key design considerations to be addressed.
17. The Committee recommends that the ACT Government implement the City in a Landscape Strategy by embedding the strategy in current and future planning controls and regulations.	Agreed in principle. As noted in relation to recommendations 1 and 2, the ACT Government has a strong strategy and policy context for a city in the landscape vision and has a range of policy and regulatory tools to implement this. For example, the Territory Plan incorporates relevant considerations in its Statement of Strategic Directions and its planning controls and requirements.

Recommendations		Government Response
		DV369 Living Infrastructure in Residential Zones proposes new provisions for site coverage in the Single Dwelling Housing Development Code and increases in planting area and new provisions for site coverage in the Multi Unit Housing Development Code applying to residential zones RZ1 to RZ5. The ACT Government recognises that cross-directorate engagement across planning issues is necessary to facilitate implementation of the city in the landscape vision and will explore the most appropriate mechanism/s to deliver this outcome.
18.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider ways developers can be encouraged to undertake landscaping beyond the minimum requirements.	Agreed. As part of its ongoing operations, the National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) has consistently provided advice to the development industry regarding landscaping for new development and redevelopment proposals. Formally issued advice that must be responded to as part of the Development Application process has consistently encouraged the provision of high-quality landscaping that promotes amenity for new developments, reduces energy consumption and contributes to the private and public realm where appropriate. DV369 Living Infrastructure in Residential Zones proposes new provisions for site coverage in the Single Dwelling Housing Development Code and increases in planting area and new provisions for site coverage in the Multi Unit Housing Development Code applying to residential zones RZ1 to RZ5.
19.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government require maintenance plans for new developments to be lodged with the planning approvals to demonstrate viability and transparency of the proposals.	Agreed. The ACT Government agrees that developments should maintain landscaping to an appropriate standard throughout the life of a development. Landscape plans are often required with development applications, which detail the proposed landscaping to be implemented. The planning and land authority considers that compliance with this part of the development approval (and/or conditions) is an ongoing requirement to be implemented by the lessee or body corporate. The ACT Government will explore the most appropriate mechanism to deliver this outcome.
20.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government progress policy that minimises the encroachment of development on higher-value natural areas.	Agreed. Any development that is proposed to impact areas of high environmental value is subject to statutory environmental approvals under both the Commonwealth's <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> and the ACT's <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>.

Recommendations		Government Response
		The ACT Planning Strategy 2018 responds to concerns and provides direction aimed at limiting our urban footprint to reduce the pressure that urban expansion places on the valued natural assets that surround the city and its landscape setting. Direction 1.1 seeks to manage growth and achieve a compact and efficient city by focusing future development opportunities within the existing urban area of Canberra. To continue to provide for housing choice in greenfield area, Direction 1.2 considers areas of investigation for potential future greenfield growth be limited to the area to the west of the city. Investigations will be undertaken to ascertain the values of this area in the context of the ACT wide opportunities for urban (greenfield) growth. The Planning Strategy also identifies under Action 2.5.2 that a strategic assessment under the Australian Government's <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> is being progressed to assess the potential impacts of development on matters of national environmental significance within the Eastern Broadacre area and develop an environmental offsets/avoidance strategy. The Eastern Broadacre area is being investigated for future employment areas.
21.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to support the trial of re-wilding projects in conjuncture with the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society and other similar stakeholders.	Agreed. The ongoing collaboration between the ACT Government, ANU and the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust will be restrengthened with the completion of a new Strategic Plan for the Mulligans Flat/Goorooyaroo Sanctuary and a revitalised approach to governance of the program. This represent the premier example of “re-wilding” in an urban area in Australia.
22.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the <i>Tree Protection Act 2005</i> to ensure best outcomes are being achieved.	Agreed. The <i>Tree Protection Act 2005</i> is currently being reviewed to ensure best outcomes are being achieved.
23.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government prioritise the planting of tree species that are as adaptable to a changing climate as possible.	Agreed. In progress - MIS 25, noting that adaptability is one important consideration among many others in species selection. The MIS 25 lists a wide variety of tree species with a diversity of traits and characteristics. This report ranks the MIS 25 species according to their climate suitability and capacity as street trees, and advises on species that are more suitable in certain scenarios.

24.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government review the viability and appropriateness of tree species that are less adaptable to climate change.	Agreed. In progress – as per recommendation 23.
25.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider how green infrastructure could be implemented in high rise developments.	Agreed in principle. The National Capital Design Review Panel (NCDRP) considers and encourages, as part of its deliberations, development proposals' contribution to the public realm, including green infrastructure, public trees and streetscape. Advice issued by the NCDRP directly references the NCDRP Design Principles for the ACT, which identify public realm, canopy trees and streetscape as key design considerations to be addressed.
26.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider current impediments to establishing balcony, courtyard or roof gardens.	Agreed. Action 5 of Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City is to: <i>Prepare a guide for use by the community and built environment professionals to support effective landscape plans, and increase the opportunity for healthy, climate resilient and biodiverse gardens and public lands.</i> This Climate-wise Landscape Guide (currently in development) will help individuals, businesses and built-environment professionals identify ways to optimise tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and permeable surfaces and promote climate-adapted ecologically sustainable urban design options and opportunities at various urban development scales.
27.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop, or commission, planting guides for balconies, courtyards and larger-sized yards.	Agreed. By supporting the effective use of living infrastructure in urban design, the Climate-wise Landscape Guide (currently in development) will contribute towards supporting action on achieving the ACT's targets of 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30% permeable surfaces within the urban footprint by 2045 in public and private realms (see also response to Recommendation 26 above).
28.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government evaluate the application of Transport Canberra and City Services standards to ensure that the best outcomes are being achieved.	Agreed in principle. All standards are subject to constant review and are updated as required to meet changing conditions and best practice.

29.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to develop urban water sensitive design guidelines through the monitoring and evaluation of past initiatives.	Agreed. Following a review of the Waterways Water Sensitive Urban Design Code in 2014, the ACT Government recently released Variation 354 to the Territory Plan, Waterways: Water Sensitive Urban Design general code with accompanying guidelines. The Variation, which took effect on 21 February 2020, revises the Waterways: Water Sensitive Urban Design General Code (WSUD Code) and proposes a number of associated consequential amendments to Territory Plan codes. The ACT Government is also reviewing the WSUD Code in relation to the performance target for mains water use reduction from 40% (compared with 2003 levels) in all new developments and redevelopments. This will ensure the code is reflective of evolving technologies in water efficiency and is contributing towards making Canberra a leading water sensitive city.
30.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government liaise with asset managers, such as ICON Water, to identify technical requirements for infrastructure and how to best balance these through the implementation of the City in a Landscape Strategy.	Agreed in Principle. The ACT Government currently liaises with external asset managers including water, sewer, telecommunications, gas and power, and will continue to do so by entering engagement with external (and internal) asset managers regarding implementation of a City in the Landscape Strategy into its Standard Operation Procedures.
31.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government liaise with asset managers, such as ICON Water, to identify any opportunities for combined implementation of the City in a Landscape Strategy.	Agreed in Principle. ACT Government currently liaises with external asset managers including water, sewer, telecommunications, gas and power, and will continue to do so by entering engagement with external (and internal) asset managers regarding implementation of a City in the Landscape Strategy into its Standard Operation Procedures.
32.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop and implement a strategy that is co-designed with, and supports, volunteer environmentalists to guide and sustain community stewardship of the environment within the ACT.	Agreed. The ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013-23 (NCS) provides direction on how to better integrate and extend conservation efforts beyond reserves and cross border, to ensure ecosystems remain healthy and well managed. The Strategy continues the support for ACT's diverse volunteer base. Strategy 5 aims to strengthen community engagement and involvement of ACT residents in nature conservation. A number of government programs provide grants (Environment Grants, Heritage Grants) and funding for implementing environmental activities by ParkCare, Urban Landcare and catchment management groups.

		Regular community planting days, and seed collection and propagation by volunteers, are delivered in partnership with Greening Australia, catchment groups and other community-based groups. The ACT Government promotes citizen science through monitoring of, and data collection on, the ACT's biodiversity by community groups, e.g. Canberra Nature Map, Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch, Frogwatch, and the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust's Latham's Snipe project. In addition, annual environmental grants are awarded to community groups to support activities and the provision of equipment and training.
33.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to invest in the Landcare and Parkcare programs and give consideration to longer-term funding for these.	Agreed. The ACT Government has provided ongoing funding to Parkcare and Waterwatch in 2020. The ACT Government continues to invest in Landcare via Catchment Groups recently committing \$125,000 per group for the 2020-21 financial year.
34.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, in conjunction with Landcare and similar groups, consider further partnership opportunities.	Agreed. The ACT Government continues to partner with Landcare and similar groups, seeking new and innovative partnership approaches to deliver more work on the ground.
35.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government, in conjunction with Landcare and similar groups, identify and implement further opportunities for Junior Landcare and Junior Parkcare.	Agreed. The ACT Government continues to encourage and support increased youth involvement in the conservation of the environment including Ngunnawal youth.
36.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider if there are opportunities for streamlined community project approvals that make it easier and less burdensome for community groups.	Agreed in principle. Improved process and streamlining of systems including for grants is being progressed in the EPSDD.

37.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government introduce a pilot scheme to enable local communities to lead, or be involved in, the design and implementation of low-cost alternative urban spaces in their neighbourhood (including ecological restoration, natural play spaces, informal pathways/cycleways, smaller areas of well-maintained dryland grass and community-based maintenance).	Noted. The ACT Government is delivering a number of approaches, such as TCCS Adopt a Park, community-led play space initiatives. These will be used to inform future approaches.
38.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to partner with research and education institutions, including primary and secondary schools, to develop and share the knowledge and expertise of environmental practice in the ACT.	Agreed. Strategy 5.5 in the Nature Conservation Strategy aims to encourage the involvement of youth in nature conservation. Schools across the ACT undertake community service activities in nature reserves and use them for nature-based education. Some also participate in Waterwatch and Frogwatch via waterbug and water quality workshops and frog surveys.
39.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider joining the Biophilic Cities Network.	Noted. The Biophilic Cities Network vision of connecting people and nature aligns with a number of Australian and ACT Government directions. Biophilic cities place nature at the core of their design and planning, and work to create abundant opportunities for people to learn about and connect with nature. There are currently only 20 Biophilic Cities in the Network. Involvement in the Network requires development of appropriate indicators, commitment to fostering urban connections to nature, with initial and ongoing annual duties, obligations and expectations for which there is no current resourcing.

40.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government further strengthen the relationship and knowledge exchange between it and local universities and research institutions through increased research partnerships.	Agreed. The ACT currently nurtures ongoing collaborations with local universities and other research institutions on a broad array of science projects and this will continue into the future. To enhance the opportunity for collaborative science, the Environment Planning and Sustainable Directorate within the ACT Government is producing a Science Plan and Research Partnership Program to increase opportunities for research collaboration in priority areas in the environment The completion of this plan will allow for a more coordinated approach to research. The plan enables transparency around ACT Government priorities for scientific research and therefore provides strong and informed opportunities for collaborations.
41.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with Friends of Grassland and other interested stakeholders to realise the potential of the North Mitchell Grasslands.	Agreed. The ACT Parks and Conservation Service is engaged and working collaboratively with Friends of Grasslands (FOG), Gungahlin Community Council, Ginninderra Catchment Group, SEE Change Gungahlin, Conservation Council ACT Region, the Dhawura Ngunnawal Committee (through EPSDD's Health Country Team) and other interested parties, encouraging a shared vision for North Mitchell Grasslands through a co-design process. FOG has been supporting the current engagement and consultation process for the reserve through their community advocacy and awareness efforts, encouraging and increasing interest in the reserve's values and exploring future possibilities for use and management whilst ensuring protection and enhancement of its values. The ACT Government has also actively provided FOG with opportunity to assist in current reserve management.
42.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government more broadly consider the opportunities for improving, rather than maintaining, areas of natural value.	Agreed. Key relevant actions within the ACT Nature Conservation Strategy are not just to manage the protected area estate (action 3.1) but also to restore priority landscapes (action 3.3) and enhance regional connectivity (action 1.3). Moreover, the extensive works undertaken to construct predator-proof fencing of Goorooyaroo Nature Reserve will improve local habitat viability for various native fauna, including some that were previously locally extinct e.g. Eastern bettong. In addition, the ACT Woodland Strategy and action plans has a vision – "The people of the ACT working together to create healthy and diverse woodlands for future generations". The ACT contains some of the most intact woodlands in Australia, including the Endangered Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Woodland. In terms of size, connectivity, diversity and habitat for threatened species, the ACT's woodlands are exceptional and the objectives of the strategy are to a) protect, b) maintain, c) improve, and d) collaborate.

43.	7The Committee recommends that the ACT Government prioritise the continued effort to remove weeds from impacted areas within the ACT.	Agreed. The annual weed strategy and reporting is now publicly available online via an interactive Story Map https://www.environment.act.gov.au/parks-conservation/plants-and-animals/Biosecurity/invasive-plants/2019-20-invasive-plants-operations-plan-story-map Note that it is not possible to remove weeds from all impacted areas.
44.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide information to the community on how to identify and respond to (known) problem weeds.	Agreed. The Invasive Plants Story Map lists the strategy and resourced priority control work https://www.environment.act.gov.au/parks-conservation/plants-and-animals/Biosecurity/invasive-plants/2019-20-invasive-plants-operations-plan-story-map In addition, the EPSDD has formed a partnership with the CSIRO's Atlas of Living Australia to help the community identify and report high risk new and emerging weeds – more can be found about this initiative at this link: https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/projects/weed-swap .
45.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government identify opportunities to reduce the spread of weeds as a result of current practices within the mowing regime.	Agreed , with a focus on protecting high conservation areas through weed control in identified buffer zones.
46.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government work with wildlife rescuers and carers to reduce the number of injured animals needing care as well as support those animals that do need care.	Agreed.
47.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government improve the use of fine-grade fruit tree netting in the ACT.	Agreed. The Conservator of Flora and Fauna is currently preparing a Native Species Conservation Plan for the Grey-headed Flying-fox. Mortality caused by entanglement in fruit netting is identified as threat to this species. The Plan will include actions to disseminate information on improving netting practices to prevent entanglement.
48.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider undertaking further programs aimed at combatting wombat mange.	Agreed. An ACT Government working group for wombat management has been formed. ACT wildlife community groups have trialled Cydectin to treat wombat mange; however, results are not promising, with only short-term effects on individuals being evident.

		The ACT Government is currently part of a national committee that aims to develop a national approach to the management of wombat mange. As part of this approach, the ACT Government aims to collaborate with universities to establish robust monitoring programs for wombat populations and to trial new methods for wombat mange treatment in a coordinated and evidence-based manner. From this, a strategy for the management of wombat populations in the ACT can be developed.
49.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to implement cat containment across the ACT.	Agreed. Mandatory cat containment is currently introduced into all new suburbs in the ACT. The expansion of cat containment into established suburbs is being considered as part of the development of a Cat Plan for the ACT. The Cat Plan will provide a management strategy for domestic and feral cats including the consideration of management options that improve the safety and welfare of both domestic cats and native animals.
50.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government commit to being a bee friendly city.	Agreed. The ACT Government acknowledges the important role of bees in pollination of food crops and flowering plants, but that bees and other invertebrates are vulnerable worldwide to disease and pests through the overuse of pesticides, herbicides, and modern agricultural practices. There are benefits in incorporating information on bees into nature-based education programs, and supporting bee hotel programs and creating habitat to attract bees such as through establishment of plants that flower in different seasons. The ACT Government released a ‘Guide for community gardens in the ACT’ in 2016. The Guide notes that, while the housing of most animals will not be permitted on community garden sites, animals considered to benefit the garden, such as bees, will generally be allowed. A half-day forum on “Bees, butterflies, birds: Maximising biodiversity by supporting pollinators” was convened in February 2020 by ACT for Bees in conjunction with Landcare ACT, Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) Rotary and included representatives from ACT Government, the ANBG, the Australian National University, Bunnings, ACT for Bees and Landcare ACT.
51.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop a guide for gardeners to support the bee friendly city, in particular, looking at pollination corridors.	Agreed. The Municipal Infrastructure Design Standards document “MIS 25 Plant Species for Urban Landscape Projects” provides information on plant selection for various management and site requirements, and has incorporated information from ACT for Bees on plant species suitable for bee foraging and pollination.

		ACT for Bees also provides a range of publicly available resources to support a bee-friendly Canberra. This includes their website (https://actforbees.org/what-we-are-doing/), a website specifically on gardening for bees (https://actforbees.org/resources/gardening-for-bees/), a downloadable flier on how to grow a bee friendly garden (https://actforbees.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ACT-FOR-BEES-flyer.pdf), and a planting guide for bees and pollinators in the ACT (https://actforbees.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ACT-for-BEES.Planting-for-Bees-and-native-bees-Dec-2017.pdf).
52.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government phase out the use of harmful pesticides and chemicals distributed or used within the ACT by government and non-government bodies as well as members of the public.	Agreed. The phase out of harmful chemicals will be undertaken in accordance with national approaches.
53.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider additional funding for maintenance of landscaped and natural environment areas, including funding to support the various fauna and flora groups in the Territory.	Noted. Please see response to recommendation 33 and 34. Any proposed additional funding should consider land management services provided directly by Government as well as funding for community groups such as Landcare and Parkcare.
54.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government introduce a water retention scheme for recycled water to be used to maintain local green spaces.	Agreed in principle. The ACT Government is currently undertaking a number of studies that will investigate the potential for potable water savings to be achieved by the collection and reuse of stormwater plus the efficiencies to be gained by upgrading the technology and infrastructure of the city's water irrigation systems.
55.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government consider including independent climate change impact analysis in the assessment of development proposals.	Agreed in principle. The assessment of potential environmental impacts of developments are key elements of the impact and merit track assessment processes under the Planning and Development Act 2007 (the Act). The consideration of greenhouse gas impacts is already considered and explored through the environmental impact assessment processes of the Act. The Government considers that the intent of this provision may be better achieved through other regulations and policies such as amendments to Territory Plan code requirements and improved building standards.

		For example, the ACT Government is currently considering Draft Variation to the Territory Plan 369 – Living Infrastructure in Residential Zones, which proposes changes to make sure standards for soft landscaping area in all residential areas (RZ1 to RZ5) are met. The draft variation responds to Action 2 of Canberra’s Living Infrastructure Plan, which seeks to achieve 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30% permeable surfaces in urban areas by 2045. The draft variation will assist in working towards achieving these targets for urban areas by making changes related to site coverage and planting area requirements on private land in all residential zones (RZ1 to RZ5).
56.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government develop an ecotourism strategy which articulates how tourists can be attracted to engage with our natural environment.	Agreed. The ACT Government is in the process of developing a Nature-based Tourism Strategy for the ACT. Refer to https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/nature-based-tourism-strategy. The Nature-based Tourism strategy will provide the framework for the tourism industry to sustainably develop the nature sector in the Canberra region to accommodate future demand for accessible nature and wildlife experiences and enable a better appreciation of our natural assets and tourism experiences. Implementation of action for the strategy will help support the visitor economy and contribute to increased spend and length of stay from both domestic and international tourists.
57.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government invest in more environmental signage at nature reserves in the Territory to better inform visitors of safe bush etiquette.	Agreed. The ACT Government will look to improve signage in reserves along with online content to ensure visitors are aware of safe bush etiquette. Signage will also seek to recognise Ngannawal peoples and the traditional custodians and their enduring connection to country. As part of the fire recovery program signage replacement will adopt these components.
58.	The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to investigate and promote ‘Nature Prescriptions’ in the ACT.	Agreed. The ACT wellbeing framework recognises the importance of the environment for the health and wellbeing of all Canberrans. Spending time in nature has been demonstrated to improve health and wellbeing at the individual and community level. The ACT Government is progressing a pilot program to facilitate the prescriptions of ‘time in nature’ by health care providers and provide a range of facilitated nature-based activities led by Health Rangers.