



Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2021-2022 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Ms Nicole Lawder on 1 November 2022: Dr Sophie Lewis took on notice the following question:

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 1 November 2022, Page 6.

In relation to:

MS LAWDER: What sort of process would you like to see introduced to ensure recommendations are followed up on.

Dr Sophie Lewis: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

Special Reports, as described in Section 21 of the *Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment Act 1993* (the Act), must be presented to the Legislative Assembly by the Minister within six sitting days after the day of receipt. For a special report given to a Minister responsible for the matter under subsection (2) (b), the Minister responsible for the matter must, within 6 months after the day of receiving the report, present to the Legislative Assembly a statement that sets out the response of the government to the report.

The Commissioner's annual report must include measures taken that year by or for the Territory in relation to the implementation of any recommendation in a state of the environment report under section 19 or special report under section 21 of the Act. Through the annual reporting process, progress on recommendations is ascertained and instances where unsatisfactory progress has occurred can be identified and highlighted in the following reporting year. In addition, through the annual report publication, progress on recommendations can be interrogated through the standing committee inquiries into annual and financial reports. Questions about progress towards recommendations identified by OCSE as unsatisfactory would be usefully directed to the lead directorates.

There is no legislated process for ensuring the implementation of recommendations beyond the mechanism described above. For most open recommendations, this open published process has seen progress in their implementation. OCSE is committed to regular and consistent reporting and welcomes all scrutiny around environmental practices and procedures.

To strengthen the quality of information provided to OCSE during the annual reporting process, OCSE would welcome preliminary meetings with lead directorates regarding the intention and delivery of recommendations following the tabling of government responses to tabled reports.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature: 

Date: 10 November 2022

By the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, Dr Sophie Lewis