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EPBC recommendations begin journey of reform

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) has welcomed today's interim report of the review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999, as an important first step in delivering improved environmental outcomes and providing an efficient approvals system that supports ongoing industry investment in Australia.

"The full detail of the interim report will take some time to digest, however, the significant reforms outlined are a welcome first step in modernising Australia's environmental legislation," said Mr Warren Pearce, Chief Executive Officer, AMEC.

"Removing the duplication of the Commonwealth and State Approvals process would be a significant achievement, with the report recommending streamlining through devolution supported by new national environmental standards."

"The Commonwealth Government's support for 'single touch' environmental bilateral assessment and approvals, and positive ongoing discussions with State and Territory Governments, suggest there is now a real chance of meaningful reform."

"This change will significantly reduce the unnecessary duplication between State and Federal systems, and offer shortened timeframes for environmental approvals, without compromising environmental outcomes."

"The mining and exploration industry need an approvals framework that provides clarity and certainty for proponent to invest in new projects."

The report also makes a range of findings around the protection of cultural heritage and AMEC will continue to constructively engage on these issues.

"AMEC will continue to work closely with the EPBC Review team and other stakeholders to assist in shaping these important reforms," said Mr Pearce.