1. On 3 November 2010 the Honourable Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous asked the Parliament of Australia’s House of Representatives Economics Committee to inquire into and report on Indigenous economic development in Queensland including the issues surrounding the Queensland Government’s *Wild Rivers Act 2005*.
2. The Terms of Reference for Committee consideration include:
* a review of existing environmental regulation, legislation in relation to mining and other relevant legislation including the Queensland Wild Rivers Act and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999;*
* assessment of the impact which legislation in the form of the Wild Rivers (Environmental Management) Bill 2010 would have, if passed; and
* options for facilitating economic development for the benefit of Indigenous people and the protection of the environmental values of undisturbed river systems.
1. The Queensland Government response identifies key issues that includes:
	* The historic, geographic and economic characteristics of North Queensland that pose considerable challenges for Indigenous economic development;
	* Significant investment by State and Commonwealth Governments to assist Indigenous economic development;
	* Potential for greater prospects to better coordinate State and Commonwealth initiatives and provide more enduring opportunities for Indigenous communities; and
	* Specific issues regarding the Bill namely:
		1. Inconsistencies between the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* and the proposed Bill;
		2. Inadequate scrutiny of transitional provisions of the Bill and the inability to review the proposed Regulation to determine how the Bill will operate; and
		3. Possible economic and environmental impacts if the Bill is passed.
2. The Queensland Government response summarises how the Queensland *Wild Rivers Act 2005* and other legislation and policy frameworks support Indigenous sustainable economic development in North Queensland.
3. Cabinet endorsed the Queensland Government response to the Parliament of Australia’s House of Representatives Economics Committee Inquiry into Indigenous Economic Development in North Queensland.
4. *Attachment*
* [The Queensland Government response to the Parliament of Australia’s House of Representatives Economics Committee Inquiry into Indigenous Economic Development in North Queensland and review of the Wild Rivers (Environmental Management) Bill 2010](Attachments/wild-rivers-qg-sub%5B1%5D.pdf)