



Green groups: Don't hand states enviro approvals

By a staff reporter | 4 Jul, 12:02 PM

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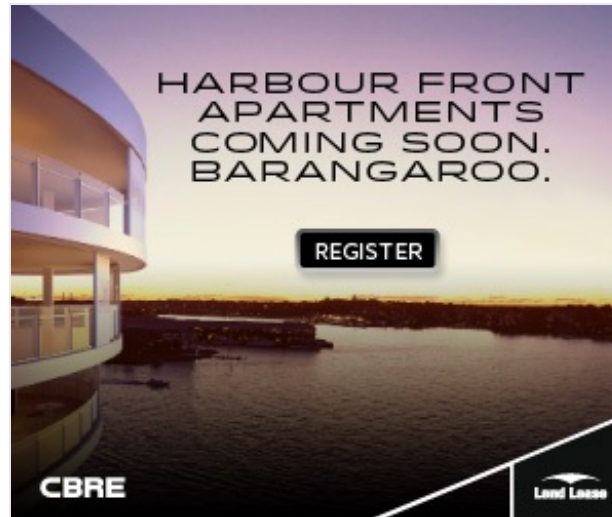
Major environmental groups such as the Australian Conservation Foundation and WWF have said that state governments **cannot be trusted** with undertaking environmental approvals under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

Business groups such as the Business Council of Australia are pushing for cuts to what they term as “green tape”. They argue that the multiple approvals across different levels of government for new projects increase costs and introduce delays without enhancing environmental outcomes.

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott in response to these concerns, has promised to delegate powers to state governments to allow for one-stop shops that would streamline government approvals of major projects such as coal mines. In addition NSW Premier Barry O’Farrell sent a letter on Tuesday requesting Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to come to an agreement with the states on streamlining environmental approvals.

But green groups are concerned that State Governments will wave through major projects without thorough scrutiny of their environmental impacts.

According to the ACF’s Don Henry, “Time after time, going back to the proposals for oil drilling on the Great Barrier and a dam on the Franklin River, state governments have shown they are more likely to put commercial interests ahead of the national interest.”



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