



## 445% Increase In Federal Environmental Regulation Since 2000

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“The Morrison government must slash environmental red tape to boost business investment and job creation in the post-coronavirus economy,” said Cian Hussey, Research Fellow at the Institute of Public Affairs.

A new report released today *The Growth and Complexity of Environmental Regulation*, authored by IPA Research Fellow Cian Hussey, finds that the number of regulations enabled by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) has increased by 445% since the year 2000.

The report is the first to quantitatively estimate both the growth and complexity of Australia’s primary piece of environmental legislation and the departmental rules it enables.

“Regulation enabled by the EPBC Act has grown by an average of 10.4 per cent each year since 2000, compared with an average annual economic growth rate of 2.9 per cent and an average annual population growth rate of 1.5 per cent over the same period,” said Mr Hussey.

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“The Morrison government should cut the number of regulations in the EPBC Act by 82 per cent, back to the year 2000 levels.”

The report uses RegData, a world leading policy analysis tool developed by academics at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, Washington D.C. RegData uses words and phrases that imply a legal obligation such as “shall”, “must” and “may not” to measure the regulatory burden using artificial intelligence, machine learning and text analytics. The analysis, which has been submitted to the statutory review of the EPBC Act, provides a unique insight into the burdensome rules the Act enables.

“The EPBC Act is too complex for the average worker or business to comply with. For example, readers are more likely to encounter new words and phrases in the EPBC Act than they are reading the original version of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet,” said Mr Hussey.

“Everything the Morrison government does from now on should be focused on getting Australians back into work. Environmental red tape is a major impediment to job-creating projects and must be slashed.” said Mr Hussey.

Previous IPA research found that legal activism by green groups enabled by Section 487 of the EPBC Act has put over \$65 billion of investment at risk in Australia by holding major projects, such as dams and coal mines, up in court for a cumulative total of 10,100 days since the year 2000.

Download the report: [\*The Growth and Complexity of Environmental Regulation.\*](#)