

# Government to overhaul environment act

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An expected major overhaul of federal environment laws should be given wide public scrutiny and a Senate inquiry, the Australian Greens say.

The office of Environment Minister Ian Campbell confirmed significant changes to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act would be announced on Thursday.

The changes are expected, in part, to provide more certainty for development in regard to strict environmental requirements.

They are also expected to restrict the ability of public groups to nominate areas for national heritage listing.

The amendment bill to the EPBC Act comes as the minister faces a decision over whether to protect Aboriginal rock art works on the development-heavy Burrup Peninsula in north Western Australia.

Greens leader Bob Brown called the planned changes anti-environment.

"This is a bill to put the industry fox in charge of the environment chook house," Senator Brown said in a statement.

"It allows the minister, under the thumb of the resource extraction lobby in particular, to veto the input of Australian citizens in protecting the nation's heritage.

"It will excuse the inexcusable, for example, Campbell's impending decision to allow Woodside to destroy more of the world's greatest rock art site on Western Australia's Burrup peninsula in coming months.

"This will be a real test for Labor."