

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 1**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, can the Minister advise the committee how the Palaszczuk Government's investments in Queensland's environment are supporting good jobs, better services, and the great Queensland lifestyle?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

As stewards of our State's environment, the Department of Environment and Science plays a leading role in protecting and managing the diverse natural and cultural assets that make Queensland unique. As well as delivering better environmental outcomes, the Department of Environment and Science portfolio also has a broader economic and social impact. Our investments contribute to: direct employment opportunities; support for new industries and markets; advice for existing businesses to become more sustainable and profitable; the development of specific skills sets and trade through project-based local employment; and greater economic and community uplift and resilience.

The Palaszczuk Government is investing in a range of important initiatives that will deliver a better, more sustainable future for current and future generations of Queenslanders. The \$2.1 billion Waste Package is driving the State's transition to a zero-waste society by 2050 and will position Queensland as a leader in the fast-emerging circular economy. The Government is supporting the waste industry, businesses and local councils to rollout new recycling infrastructure. This is projected to result in three times as many ongoing jobs created as compared to traditional landfill industries. The department is also supporting new industries and growing small businesses through the Containers for Change program. Diverting waste from landfill reduces impact on our communities and protects our lifestyle. The kerbside collection trials for 'Food Organics, Garden Organics' provide better services to households and supports local businesses and the economy through additional resource streams. Education programs and grants funding are also being provided to support schools with organic waste avoidance and resource recovery projects.

The Palaszczuk Government is taking action on climate change to accelerate emissions reduction and create more jobs, in more industries. In addition to investing in renewable energy, the Government is also providing \$32.6 million to help Queensland communities deliver local emissions reduction projects. This funding will also help drive better climate science and modelling so we can further accelerate our actions and meet the 2050 zero net emissions target. We have already achieved 20 per cent of our renewable energy target and are almost two-thirds of the way to

achieving our 2030 emissions reduction target. Investment in the Land Restoration and Natural Capital Funds are just two examples of how the Palaszczuk Government is supporting the development of innovative market-based solutions. In addition to reducing carbon emissions, they are supporting the creation of new jobs and diversified income streams for landholders – providing economic, environmental and social benefits.

This Palaszczuk Government is continuing to build the resilience of the iconic Great Barrier Reef. Since 2015, close to \$1 billion has been invested on Reef protections including water quality improvements. This financial year, an additional \$10 million will expand the Reef Assist program. This will deliver more environmental projects and jobs across all Reef catchment areas from Cape York to Bundaberg.

This Government is also embarking on the largest ever expansion of public protected areas in the State's history with an investment of \$262.5 million. It secures the long-term future of valuable ecosystems, vital wildlife and threatened species habitats and our cultural heritage. This investment will support the 17,000 jobs that rely on our protected areas while also creating new economic and employment opportunities, including for traditional owner groups. Protected areas also play a key role in supporting the State's tourism sector. Through continued investment in capital works infrastructure in the State's parks and forests, the visitor experience which is vital to growing our domestic and international nature-based ecotourism market is also being enhanced. This infrastructure investment also supports regional economies, businesses and tradespeople.

Our environmental activities are supporting direct employment through Indigenous Ranger programs, commercial arrangements with small and medium businesses and project-based activities with natural resource management groups.

This is just a snapshot of how the Palaszczuk Government is investing in our environment and delivering real benefits for Queenslanders.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 2**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, can the Minister advise the committee on the Palaszczuk Government's land-sector carbon projects and the Land Restoration Fund, and how it's benefitting farmers, communities and good jobs across Queensland?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland's leading position in the Carbon Market Institute's inaugural Carbon Farming Scorecard speaks to the Palaszczuk Government's ground-breaking \$500 million Land Restoration Fund, strong policy initiatives and ongoing partnerships with key stakeholders. These initiatives are protecting the State's environment while also creating jobs and driving economic recovery from COVID-19 through the growth of carbon farming.

The Carbon Market Institute ranked each State based on how they are developing their land-based emissions offset markets, with Queensland earning a high score of 80 per cent. This excellent result reflects Queensland's leading role in delivering carbon projects that generate environmental and economic co-benefits like jobs and local business for Queenslanders, especially First Nations peoples and regional communities.

The Land Restoration Fund was the first scheme in Australia to value and pay for the strong co-benefits associated with carbon farming projects. This means Queensland landholders aren't just paid for the carbon they store but will also benefit from longer-term outcomes like healthier waterways, increased habitat for threatened species, and more resilient landscapes.

The Palaszczuk Government has invested in programs that provide a practical resource to help farmers, First Nations peoples and other landholders in Queensland take the first step towards developing a carbon project. For example, through the Land Restoration Fund's Carbon Farming Advice Rebate scheme which offered landholders up to \$10,000 to receive carbon farming advice from approved professionals.

From the first two investment rounds, the Land Restoration Fund currently has \$102.6 million of projects contracted or with an offer for contract. The investments are supporting projects in 16 local government areas across regional Queensland, boosting the economic sustainability of communities, enabling more sustainable land management practices, supporting First Nations peoples to remain on country, and restoring and protecting our unique biodiversity.

Projects contracted through the Land Restoration Fund's first investment round are already supporting local training and employment opportunities such as plant operators, project managers and scientists, as well as roles on Country for Indigenous Rangers.

## HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 3

Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 2 of the SDS, can the Minister advise the committee on crocodile management in Queensland, and any recent scientific research?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

In 2021, the Palaszczuk Government was the first Government to commit to ongoing crocodile management funding of \$3 million per annum. This allows the Department of Environment and Science to employ 18 frontline wildlife management staff to respond to crocodile sightings, remove problem crocodiles, conduct research and continue the successful *Be Crocwise* program.

From 2016 to 2019, the department conducted a comprehensive monitoring program of the estuarine crocodile population throughout its range in Queensland. During 2020-21, the department compiled and analysed data collected for this program and compared these to historic data to assess how the population had changed in size, distribution, density, and size class structure over time—using results collected from as far back as 1979. This work was then subject to expert peer review.

Results from the program showed that there is no evidence of a southward expansion of the species range. In addition, it showed that, although crocodile numbers have increased slightly along Queensland's east coast from Cooktown to Ayr, the average size of the animals has decreased over time in waterways along that section of coastline. This is believed to be because 'problem' crocodiles assessed as posing a threat to public safety are removed from the wild under the Queensland Crocodile Management Program, and these tend to be larger than average.

In mid-2021, key conclusions from analysis of scientific data from the monitoring program were released by the department in the *Queensland Estuarine Crocodile Monitoring Program 2016-2019 Key Findings Report* which is available on the department's website at

[https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/244613/qld-estuarine-croc-monitoring-program-2016-19-report.pdf](https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/244613/qld-estuarine-croc-monitoring-program-2016-19-report.pdf).

The department has also used the research to enhance its crocodile management program and its *Be Crocwise* community safety program. It has also informed future scientific research – including genomic research using crocodile DNA and detailed population modelling, to determine how the crocodile population would respond to different management regimes. I am pleased to advise that this important work is well underway.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 4**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Minister advise the committee on its partnership EcoBiz program with CCIQ, and how it is helping businesses keep utility costs down while also helping the environment?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

ecoBiz is a Queensland Government funded program delivered by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland. The program provides free personal coaching, site surveys, training, and tools to small and medium sized businesses to help them improve resource efficiency, environmental sustainability, reduce operating costs, and assess and manage climate risks to business. In 2021-22, the Queensland Government invested \$1.5 million in this program and has committed a further \$1.5 million in 2022-23.

ecoBiz Star Partners are saving an average of 31 per cent off their energy bills, 21 per cent on their water bills and 16 per cent on their waste bills. In addition, ecoBiz Star Partner businesses that are environmental authority holders are potentially eligible for a 10 per cent reduction on their annual environmentally relevant activity fee, administered by the Queensland Government, when at least a 10 per cent reduction is attained in either energy, water, or waste.

In 2021-22, the ecoBiz program undertook 326 energy and water efficiency coaching sessions, as well as 206 waste assessments, 18 industry group cluster workshops, and three Leaders Forum events.

A Circular Economy Pilot program was completed with three small and medium sized businesses implementing circular economy initiatives with successful outcomes:

- 1,300 tonnes of green waste and excavated materials was converted into soil enhancers and products – enough to remediate around 250 hectares of land;
- 95 per cent of onsite manufacturing waste was diverted from landfill; and
- partnerships were developed along a textile supply chain to trial processes to collect, sort, and reprocess post-consumer textile waste into new products.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 5**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Minister advise the committee on the Palaszczuk Government's roadmap to phase out single-use plastics and how it will be bolstered by the \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to reducing plastic waste and the environmental and economic impacts of plastic pollution. Initiatives to-date that are helping contribute to these objectives include the lightweight single-use plastic shopping bag ban, which started on 1 July 2018; and the highly successful container refund scheme, which started on 1 November 2018.

The ban on single-use plastic straws, stirrers, plates, unenclosed bowls and cutlery, and expanded polystyrene takeaway food containers and cups commenced on 1 September 2021.

Following a public survey and consultation with businesses on additional items that may be included under a further ban, I was pleased to make several important announcements on 1 July 2022.

Starting from 1 September 2023, there will be a ban on cotton buds with plastic stems, plastic microbeads in rinseable personal care and cleaning products, and expanded polystyrene loose packaging (packing 'peanuts').

I also recently announced that we will introduce a reusability standard for heavyweight plastic shopping bags and released a five-year roadmap for proposed future action on single-use plastic items. The five-year roadmap is designed to provide industry and consumers with a transparent trajectory for future Government action. It also provides a basis for ongoing engagement with Queensland industries to ensure concerns are incorporated into policy design and timing. The roadmap also provides time for the market to identify solutions for alternative products and address supply chain challenges.

As an action under the roadmap, the Government will lead the development of reusability standards, starting with shopping bags, that will include design, testing, recyclability and recycled-content requirements. Providing these requirements will help grow on-shore demand for recycled soft plastic products supporting industry investment decisions into new soft plastic recycling capacity, which could be eligible for support through the Recycling and Jobs Fund.

I also announced that we would launch an Innovation Challenge this year to identify suitable alternatives for coffee cups. Funding through the Recycling and Jobs Fund will assist with trial and/or commercialisation sites to test alternative products. The Fund will also support opportunities that leverage private sector investment decisions to establish on-shore manufacturing and reprocessing facilities.

More broadly, the Recycling and Jobs Fund will support the implementation of regional waste management plans, infrastructure and non-infrastructure actions, behaviour change campaigns and initiatives, industry development, circular economy initiatives, and research and development projects.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 6**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 6 of the SDS, could the Minister advise on the circumstances that had led to missing the department's target for planned burning?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to managing fire in our national parks and State forests, reducing the impact of damaging bushfire and ensuring strong collaboration with all partners in fire management.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) within the Department of Environment and Science manages just over 13 million hectares across Queensland.

QPWS takes its fire management responsibilities very seriously. Priority is given to protecting human life in all prescribed burns and in all bushfire responses.

Rangers work year-round to implement prescribed burns and undertake other hazard mitigation activities, with prescribed burning being the primary tool used for managing bushfire risk on Queensland's parks and forests.

The conditions for planned burning have been very challenging as Queensland experienced continued mild and wet conditions from the start of 2022, through to the end of June 2022, with significant rainfall and flooding affecting most of the State.

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook reports that Autumn rainfall in Queensland was 21.9 per cent above average, with large areas of the State having totals in the wettest 10 per cent of records since 1900.

Despite these factors, QPWS Rangers have conducted a comparable number of planned burns to preceding years; with 435 planned burns in 2021/22, compared to 454 in 2020/21 and 397 in 2019/20.

In previous years, the drier conditions supported the more effective spread of prescribed fire resulting in this number of prescribed burns meeting the bushfire hazard mitigation targets.

Over the next month, QPWS Rangers are continuing to undertake planned burns across Queensland as different areas of the State dry out. QPWS is also working with partner agencies, First Nations peoples, and park and forest neighbours to ensure preparedness for the 2022 bushfire season.



## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 7**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 6 of the SDS, can the Minister advise on how the government is assisting councils to manage flying foxes, including through utilising relevant research?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

In 2016, the then Department of Environment and Heritage Protection engaged the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to undertake a comprehensive scientific study into little red flying-foxes, as limited information about the species was available to inform effective management and conservation approaches. The objective was to gain an improved understanding of little red flying-fox biology and movement dynamics which could in turn inform practices undertaken by land managers to address community-wildlife conflict issues in the vicinity of urban flying-fox roosts.

In November 2020, CSIRO delivered a comprehensive 550-page scientific research report. This was a culmination of eight different research projects into little red flying-fox movement and behaviour. That research indicates significant complexity in the underlying ecology and behaviour of the species.

Key components of the research have been shared with the relevant councils for their use.

The Department of Environment and Science has been developing additional guidance material from the CSIRO research to further inform both land managers and the public. This material will be completed later in 2022 and subsequently released on the department's website and promoted through stakeholder networks.

Since 2011, the department has also been a significant contributor to the National Flying-Fox Monitoring Program, a CSIRO-led monitoring program.

Finally, the department is assisting local governments across Queensland to manage flying-foxes by providing \$2 million in funding over 2020-2024 under the Local Government Flying-Fox Roost Management Grants Program.

This Program has already allocated over \$1.12 million to help local governments mitigate the negative impacts of urban flying-fox roosts (such as noise, odour, and mess) and support local communities to co-exist with flying-foxes.

## HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 8

Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 6 of the SDS, can the Minister advise on the reasons behind the variation between 2021-22 estimated and actual in the percentage of Queensland's land that is protected?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

Since 2015, the protected area estate has grown by 1.2 million hectares.

Through tenure realignment processes, there are occasions where the total number of hectares within the protected area estate are temporarily reduced while legislative tenure changes are enacted.

This was the case at the end of 2021-22 which resulted in a small 0.06 per cent differential between the target and estimated actual protected area percentage.

The adjustments that resulted in this difference were the result of legislative requirements and boundary rectifications including:

- 106,066 hectares of the protected area estate were temporarily reverted to reserves under the *Land Act 1994* as a necessary step in converting the Jardine River and Heathlands Resources Reserves to National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land). The majority of these hectares are expected to revert back to protected area in 2022-23; and
- 2,448 hectares “loss” in nature refuges when the 220,905-hectare Rutland Plains Nature Refuge was remapped using modern survey methods following the conversion of the nature refuge conservation agreement from a termed agreement to a perpetual agreement.

In the 2022-23 budget, the Queensland Government has allocated \$262.5 million over four years to support land acquisition and capital works across the protected area estate. This funding will ensure the Government continues to grow the protected area estate as evidenced by acquisitions in 2021-22 of over 167,000 hectares.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 9**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 3 of the SDS, can the Minister advise on how the government is delivering on its commitment that there would be no impact on households from the waste levy?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government has ensured that the levy has no impact on households by providing an annual payment rebate to local governments. The rebate offsets the levy liability councils incur when they dispose of household waste to landfill.

In 2021 local government was consulted to determine a pathway that both protects households while also increasing recycling rates and reducing the amount of household waste going into landfill.

This pathway includes a commitment to continue the advance payments to councils at 105 per cent in 2022-23 before those payments begin to taper as council and industry gear up to help Queenslanders divert more rubbish away from landfill.

In June 2022 councils received \$672.4 million in upfront advanced annual payments for the next four financial years from the Queensland Government.

While the primary purpose of the annual payment rebate is to offset the costs of the levy liability on households, this advanced rebate will also enable councils to bring forward investment to ensure the delivery of behaviour change opportunities and services are put in place earlier, to help reduce the amount of household waste disposed to landfill.

In addition to the support through advanced annual payments, the Palaszczuk Government is providing a \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund to deliver the infrastructure we need to transition to a zero-waste economy.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 10**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

With reference to page 10 of the SDS, could the Minister outline how the government is investing in the next generation of leaders?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to investing in the next generation of leaders. For the Department of Environment and Science, examples include the continued support and delivery of two flagship youth leadership programs – the Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program and the YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament. Other programs have been designed to inspire young people to consider Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at school, university or TAFE and then in their career choices.

In June this year, the department delivered the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Queensland Indigenous Youth Leadership Program. Since 2004, the Program has provided more than 670 First Nations young Queenslanders the opportunity to develop skills as emerging leaders to bring positive change to their local communities.

The Program receives wide-ranging support from community leaders, Elders, and Members of Parliament. It is driven by young people, for young people, with past participants returning as facilitators and mentors each year. The confidence and skills young people gain through this Program are invaluable. Many participants go on to develop initiatives within their community and on to careers and volunteering in social and community development, education, health, the environment, enterprise, and arts and culture. They will also join the alumni network of emerging leaders to connect with Government, achieving great things for themselves, their communities, and our State into the future.

For example, a past participant of the Program from Cairns has gone on to co-found, and currently chairs, the Deadly Inspiring Youth Doing Good Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation. She is also actively involved in a range of Indigenous advisory and community groups and dedicates her spare time to volunteering and undertaking projects in her local community. She credits the Program for helping her to understand her strengths and develop connections with a network of like-minded First Nations young people. She is passionate about the Program, returning as a lead facilitator to coach and guide First Nations young people to reach their potential and become leaders in their communities.

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament kicked off again in April this year and delivers a bi-partisan leadership program that creates a unique opportunity for young Queenslanders across the State to become Youth Members of their electorates. The Youth Members are able to have their say about their community's issues and concerns and learn about parliamentary processes.

This year, 93 young people are representing Queensland electorates and are developing Bills for debate during their annual sitting week which will be held from 25 September to 1 October 2022.

Programs such as the Queensland Women in STEM Prize and the Young Tall Poppy Science awards are also designed to inspire young people to consider STEM subjects at school, university or TAFE and then in their career choices.

These programs are examples of how the Palaszczuk Government is investing in the next generation of leaders and supporting young people by providing opportunities to develop leadership skills.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 11**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister detail how much funding has been spent on managing protected areas per hectare, broken down by category of protected area (eg national park, nature refuge) for the past 5 years?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland has more than 300 national parks and over 700 other protected areas, State forests and land that are managed by the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) in partnership with First Nations peoples.

QPWS has a planning framework that provides a values-based planning approach to park and forest management, consistent with global best practice.

On-ground, QPWS rangers work in management units that in many instances, are responsible for several national parks, State forests and reserves. For this reason, it is not possible to identify funding expended by category of protected area, nor does the Department of Environment and Science measure expenditure on management of the protected area system on a per hectare basis. This is because there are significant variations in the cost of managing protected areas across Queensland's different bioregions, and from year to year due to seasonal and weather impacts. For example, on a per hectare basis the cost of weed and pest management activities in Queensland's Channel Country during a drought is likely to be significantly different from the cost of weed and pest management activities in the Wet Tropics during a season with average or above average rainfall.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 12**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister detail what monitoring is undertaken of private protected area sites, and how much landholders receive (ie how much funding per hectare of land protected) from the State Government for these areas?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland's Private Protected Area Program is the largest in Australia by land area. It is comprised of 553 nature refuges and one special wildlife reserve covering over 4.47 million hectares of conservation-significant land.

Given the scale and geographic distribution of the network, the Private Protected Area Program applies a range of strategies to monitor the condition of private protected areas. These include provisions within a conservation agreement that require landholders to proactively report on threatening processes; site visits conducted by Program officers; and through contractual arrangements with external suppliers.

In 2021-22, over \$1.6 million has been acquitted to support management of private protected areas as part of the Department of Environment and Science's expanded NatureAssist toolkit. This includes \$922,790 to nature refuge landholders for on-ground management activities; \$175,000 for conservation projects on newly established nature refuges; \$382,000 in progress payments as part of a two-year pilot contract with Ecosure Pty Ltd to deliver a suite of products and services to assist in building nature refuge landholder management capacity; and \$115,000 to support management of Pullen Pullen Special Wildlife Reserve.

In 2022-23, the Private Protected Area Program has a budget allocation of \$2.325 million to continue the delivery of an expanded NatureAssist toolkit for private protected area landholders. This allocation will fund grant programs for landholders that assist them to actively protect, manage and enhance the natural and cultural values of their private protected areas. Grant assistance is determined by criteria that ensure activities reflect the management requirements of the particular private protected area and value for money, rather than a rigid formula determined by the number of hectares protected.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 13**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister provide a breakdown of the \$1.1 billion ‘Recycling and Jobs Fund’, including:

- a. the total money spent to date
- b the amount allocated to date and when the spend is scheduled and
- c. a breakdown of all projects which will be supported by the fund.

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government’s 10-year \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund is the largest investment in recycling in Queensland’s history.

The Fund was established at the commencement of the 2022-23 Financial Year accordingly, detailed arrangements for the Fund are being finalised.

It will drive Queensland’s transition to a zero-waste society by supporting initiatives aimed at avoiding waste generation; increasing recycling rates; building new resource recovery infrastructure; and creating more jobs in more industries right across Queensland.

The Recycling and Jobs Fund will co-invest alongside councils, industry and the Commonwealth Government to transform Queensland’s approach to waste management and resource recovery.

Following the model of South East Queensland, regional waste plans are under development and will detail priority projects that are required to support higher recovery and recycling rates.

The Queensland Government over the next four years has allocated \$417.5 million across a range of initiatives, to support our transition to a zero-waste economy.

Further decisions will be made over time to address emerging trends and opportunities and to take advantage of emerging technologies and approaches.

The Recycling and Jobs Fund is part of a broader \$2.1 billion waste package over 10 years. \$672.4 million of this package was paid to councils in June 2022 to reduce the impact of the waste levy on households for the next four financial years. This provides the ability for councils to improve their forward budget planning and make decisions concerning the introduction of new services and infrastructure and ultimately reduce household waste going to landfill.



## HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 14

Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister provide further details of the ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ and the ‘Saving Queensland’s Threatened Species’ funds including a breakdown of funding allocated to projects, and any specific targets for the funding?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland is recognised internationally for its enormous global biodiversity, being home to thousands of species of national and global significance. The Palaszczuk Government allocated almost \$40 million of new funding in the 2022-23 Queensland State Budget to help protect Queensland’s native animals, including koalas at risk across the south-east.

South East Queensland has the highest concentration of koalas in our State, but they now face a number of threats. That’s why the *South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy 2020-2025* includes the strongest koala protections Queensland has ever seen, increasing both area and level of protection for our local koalas.

The Government has increased funding of \$24.6 million to the ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ program over four years and an initial \$1 million per annum ongoing to extend and accelerate implementation of the Strategy. Including \$3 million over two years which has been allocated to increase capacity of the South East Queensland Wildlife Hospital Network to rescue, rehabilitate and release sick, injured and orphaned koalas.

Funding allocated over forward years (2022 to 2026) will underpin critical actions outlined in the Strategy to help stop the decline of our koala population.

Key actions under the Strategy and ‘Saving Queensland’s Koalas’ program include:

- koala habitat restoration
- targeted investment to reduce koala mortality in koala priority threat areas
- grants for on-ground koala conservation programs
- implementation of a First Nations Koala Action Plan
- improved koala habitat mapping
- community education programs

Individual projects will be identified and contracted through procurement and grant processes, with clear process and criteria that maximise conservation outcomes and value for money.

The Palaszczuk Government is also providing increased funding of \$14.7 million to the 'Saving Queensland's Threatened Species' program over four years and \$1 million per annum ongoing. This funding will enhance Queensland's protection and recovery of threatened species by implementing the *Threatened Species Program*, focusing on the protection and recovery of species most at risk of extinction by on-ground conservation action.

Funding allocated over forward years (2022 to 2026) will support key initiatives under the 'Saving Queensland's Threatened Species' program including:

- delivery of landscape and seascape wide approaches to protect and recover threatened species
- prioritise species at most risk of extinction and implementing on-ground action plans with key communities, non-government organisations, Land and Sea Ranger groups and researchers
- maintain Queensland's threatened species list as accurate, science-based and compliant with the other jurisdictions
- enhanced threatened species assessment

Individual projects will be identified and contracted through procurement and grant processes, with clear process and criteria that maximise conservation outcomes and value for money.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 15**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Are there any properties the Department has acquired for the protected areas estate which have not yet been gazetted, and if so, can the Minister detail the size of those properties and when she expects them to be gazetted?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Department of Environment and Science currently has 27 holdings covering 281,312 hectares being prepared for dedication which includes recent large acquisitions of Bramwell and Richardson stations (131,900 hectares) and The Lakes (35,300 hectares). Many of these properties are scheduled for dedication in the 2022–2023 financial year.

Prior to a property being gazetted as protected area all existing third party interests are required to be authorised, resolved or transitioned from the property. The department systematically works through all such interests. Timeframes are contingent on negotiation of complex tenure issues and discussions to resolve third party interests.

Examples of third-party interests include:

- allowance for business transition of previous landholder;
- preparing replacement authorities for existing power line easements that run through the acquired properties; or
- negotiation of the early exit of mining exploration permits.

In other circumstances, such as on Cape York Peninsula, the department is working in close partnership with First Nations peoples to negotiate a tenure outcome. In these cases, acquired lands will be granted as Aboriginal freehold and simultaneously a portion of the area will be dedicated as National Park – Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land. This includes Bramwell and Richardson Stations, which were acquired in February 2022.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 16**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Has the Minister had confirmation of the Federal Government's support of the Yellow Crazy Ants funding? Will the Minister commit to the State Government delivering the funding required even if the Federal Government do not match it?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government remains committed to the ongoing work to continue the eradication of yellow crazy ants in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. In the 2022-23 State budget, the Government allocated \$12 million over four years (\$18 million over six years) for control of yellow crazy ants in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and adjacent areas.

During the recent Federal election, the incoming Australian Government committed \$224.5 million nationally over the forward estimates to establish a Saving Native Species program. This commitment included funding targeted at koala conservation, addressing the invasive yellow crazy ants and additional Landcare rangers.

We have been working constructively with the new Federal Government to progress our shared commitment to addressing yellow crazy ants in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 17**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister provide details of the ‘Accelerating Climate Action’ funding including what emissions analysis, modelling and projections the Department currently does and what this funding will enable them to extend?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

To date, the Queensland Government has relied heavily on emissions projections provided by the Commonwealth. However, these projections are based on high-level assumptions about Queensland’s future growth and contain limited sub-sectoral detail.

The new funding will support the building of an ongoing in-house capability for greenhouse gas emissions modelling and analytics. This will allow Queensland to create our own projections of future emissions, based on more intimate knowledge of State investment decisions, emissions reduction and other related sectoral policies, and our economy. It will ensure that all sectors are modelled with consistent underlying assumptions, and account for important cross-sectoral interactions, such as the linkage between electrification of transport and decarbonisation of the electricity grid. As an ongoing capability, projections will be able to be updated annually to consider changes in Australia’s and the global economy, technology costs, and Government and industry investment and action on climate change.

This emissions modelling capability will inform Queensland Government policy and investment decisions. It will allow more fine-grained quantification of the emissions, abatement and economic impacts of different options to strengthen decision-making. It will also support better and more timely tracking of progress towards Queensland’s emissions reduction targets. The sophistication of this capability will be built over time.

Regarding climate science, the Department of Environment and Science provides the Queensland Future Climate Dashboard, which includes downscaled climate projections to support the Queensland Government, communities and industry take climate action by providing the best available scientific information on the impacts of a changing climate. The new funding for climate science capability will enable a new suite of downscaled climate projections using the latest generation of global climate models - CMIP6.

The new funding also includes \$14 million over two years, out of a total investment of \$32.6 million over four years by the department, to accelerate climate action across the State to pilot climate action and emission reduction projects at the local scale, involving community organisations, local councils and industry.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 18**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

In the 2022-23 Capital Statement ‘Sustainable power supply initiatives’ is listed. Can the Minister provide an itemised list of projects this will be expended on?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

In 2022-23, the Department of Environment and Science will invest a further \$800,000 on sustainable power initiatives in the State’s national parks.

Major projects to be completed in 2022-23 include solar power and battery storage systems at Heathlands Resources Reserve in Cape York and Blackdown Tableland National Park. Detailed planning and design work will also be undertaken on the next phase of energy conservation initiatives for K’gari (Fraser Island) Great Sandy National Park.

Since 2019, the department has invested over \$5 million to install 10 major solar systems with battery storage at the Mon Repos Turtle Centre and in national parks including Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land) (CYPAL), Diamantina National Park, Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park, K’gari (Fraser Island) Great Sandy National Park and Daintree National Park (CYPAL).

These investments in contemporary renewable energy solutions have resulted in major reductions in diesel fuel consumption and help deliver on the agency commitment to be net zero by 2030 or sooner. Renewable energy power supply on our park estate has increased ten-fold in the last two years.

## **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice**

**No. 19**

**Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Could the Minister provide a breakdown of Department of Science staff, with the staffing identified per division or project?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

There are 377 Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) positions allocated to the Science division of the Department of Environment and Science as part of the 2022-23 FTE budget.

## HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 20

Asked on Wednesday, 13 July 2022

**THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—**

#### **QUESTION:**

Can the Minister confirm whether the department has partnered with any overseas or local non-government or not-for-profit organisations to purchase land for national parks?

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Committee for the question.

In October 2020, the Palaszczuk Government released *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030*, a 10-year plan for supporting the growth, management and sustainability of national parks and other protected areas.

One objective of the Strategy is to secure innovative funding streams to promote, manage and grow the State's protected area system. A key action to achieve this outcome is to develop connections and partnerships with non-government philanthropic and not-for-profit organisations.

Over the past two years, the Department of Environment and Science has successfully partnered with both international and national philanthropic organisations, such as The Wyss Foundation, and not-for-profit organisations, such as Greenfleet Australia. These partnerships have resulted in significant co-funding contributions for future national park land expansion.

As the emerging natural capital market evolves, the department will continue to work with non-government philanthropic and not-for-profit organisations to leverage further co-investment support. This will assist the department to secure more high conservation value properties for dedication as national parks for the enjoyment of Queenslanders and visitors.