

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 1

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

When will the government release the next Statewide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government continues to take strong action on vegetation management using the best available science to protect Queensland's natural environment for future generations.

The Statewide Landcover and Trees Study, known as SLATS, has monitored vegetation clearing rates in Queensland since 1988.

The 2018-19 SLATS report will be released next year.

The Department of Environment and Science is investing \$2.028 million in 2020-21 to ensure SLATS uses the best available science.

The program of enhancements includes a transition from Landsat to higher resolution Sentinel-2 satellite imagery for the SLATS woody vegetation clearing analysis. In addition, combining higher resolution satellite imagery with computing technologies and machine learning is enabling a detailed baseline woody vegetation extent map for the State. The enhanced SLATS program is also developing a monitoring methodology for vegetation regrowth, and a bio-condition mapping framework.

Enhancements to SLATS will significantly improve Queensland's scientific evidence base and monitoring capacity to underpin vegetation management, and inform a range of environment, natural resource and disaster management applications.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 2

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

How is the government delivering its commitment to improve the future management of Lake Eyre Basin?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government remains committed to working with First Nations peoples, industry, local councils, stakeholders and communities to ensure the sustainable management of the Lake Eyre Basin.

In keeping with this commitment, a Lake Eyre Basin stakeholder working group will be established to discuss sustainable management of the area and inform the development of a consultation Regulatory Impact Statement.

Members of the working group will include Traditional Owners, industry bodies, local government, scientific experts and government departments.

Additionally, in December 2019 the Queensland Government endorsed the Department of Environment and Science supporting a Lake Eyre Basin Traditional Owner Alliance to be an active partner in decision-making about, and management of, the area.

Three forums initiated by First Nations peoples of the Lake Eyre Basin have contributed valuable information about aspirations for future management and resulted in the informal establishment of the Lake Eyre Basin Traditional Owner Alliance. A fourth forum is scheduled for early 2021.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 3

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 give an update on the review of the Great Sandy Marine Park Zoning Plan?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Great Sandy Marine Park was declared in 2006 and contains areas of high ecological value that support wetlands of international importance; habitats for threatened species such as turtles, dugong, shorebirds and grey nurse sharks; and supports a range of recreational and commercial uses.

The first comprehensive review of the Great Sandy Marine Park zoning plan is currently in progress, with a discussion paper released for public consultation receiving over 3,000 submissions. This high level of response demonstrates the community's interest in the marine park and its future management.

In December 2019, the Butchulla People were granted a Native Title Determination for a large portion of the Marine Park. As such, the Butchulla People's Native Title rights over the sea country, and the rights and interest of other First Nations peoples with country that is within and adjoining the Marine Park, need to be fully considered and incorporated in the zoning plan review.

To ensure the zoning plan review is based on the best available science an independent scientific reference group (SRG) has been formed to provide scientific input to the process and advise on potential management changes.

During 2020, progress on the zoning plan review has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in relation to the delivery of targeted stakeholder consultation.

With input from the SRG and First Nations peoples, the Department of Environment and Science is developing a range of draft enhancements to the zoning plan which will be the subject of further public consultation.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 4

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister advise how many crocodile sightings were reported to the Department in 2019-20 and the average time taken to remove problem crocodiles?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

In 2019-20, 536 estuarine crocodile sightings were reported to the Department of Environment and Science.

The Service Delivery Standard performance measure for estuarine crocodile management in 2019-20 is the median time taken to resolve declared problem crocodiles was not to exceed seven business days. The actual median of the time taken to resolve problem crocodiles in 2019-20 was less than 1 business day.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 5

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 please detail how the Government is partnering with Traditional Owners in joint management arrangements in national parks?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government is committed to partnership with Traditional Owners in joint management arrangements across the State's national parks. The Department of Environment and Science partners with Traditional Owners to jointly manage the natural and cultural values and the visitor facilities within these national parks with resources to manage the land, and camping revenue for economic and governance activities.

The department has partnered with the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC) for joint management arrangements for Naree Budjong Djara National Park on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and Teerk Roo Ra (Peel Island). Those arrangements were enabled by legislative changes to the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*, which were debated in Parliament and subject to public scrutiny and oversight.

The development of the Management Plan for Naree Budjong Djara National Park on Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) involved public consultation. Engagement with the commercial tour operators and community on Mulgumpin (Moreton Island) ahead of future joint management of that national park will be taking place early in the new year.

This partnership has had many achievements including QYAC, through a whale watching permit, undertaking whale watching tours in the Moreton Bay Marine Park, and the collaborative development of the Minjerribah Protected Area Expansion Strategy.

The Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program has returned over 3.7 million hectares of land to Traditional Owners as either national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal Land), nature refuges on Aboriginal freehold or Aboriginal freehold land. In relation to park management on Cape York, the Government is partnering with Traditional Owners to jointly manage 28 Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land national parks. This protects 2.17 million hectares of land with outstanding natural and cultural values.

While these are specific statutory joint management arrangements, a broad range of other collaborative management arrangements exist across the State. For example, the department collaborates with the registered Prescribed Body Corporates for Butchulla land and sea country. This co-stewardship arrangement sees employment opportunities as Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers for Butchulla peoples and input into the management of fire, pest, Wongari (dingo) and visitor management programs to guide land and sea management on K'gari (Fraser Island) and within the Great Sandy Marine Park.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 6

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister detail how the Government is growing Queensland's protected areas?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government released its 10-year roadmap, *Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030* (the Strategy), to establish the future strategic direction for the State's protected areas, both public and private.

An initial investment of \$60 million over four years has been allocated to implement the Strategy, which includes \$28 million for strategic land acquisitions and \$8 million to expand and support management of private protected areas.

In 2020-21, a total budget of \$15.8 million has been allocated to the strategic acquisition of properties for dedication as public protected areas, including:

- \$7.3 million for land acquisitions;
- \$6.5 million for strategic acquisitions and tenure dealings in far north Queensland; and
- \$2 million for the Great Barrier Reef Island Arks project.

Negotiations will also continue in 2020-21 for high priority acquisitions. Funding of \$1.2 million has been allocated to the expansion and management of private protected areas in 2020-21.

This is in addition to the Queensland Government's strong record, with protected areas in Queensland increasing by over 1.2 million hectares since 2015. Queensland's protected area system now covers an area more than twice the size of Tasmania and includes the largest private protected area network in Australia.

Queensland is also the first State to create Special Wildlife Reserves to provide national park-level protection for private land of exceptional natural and cultural value. Pullen Pullen Reserve in western Queensland was dedicated Australia's first Special Wildlife Reserve in September 2020.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 7

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister give an update on the Palaszczuk Government's initiatives to combat climate change?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government is taking strong action to address the impacts of climate change and ensure the long-term economic security and resilience of our economy, communities and industries.

The Palaszczuk Government has committed to developing a 10-year Climate Action Plan in consultation with stakeholders. The Action Plan will map the pathway forward for the next decade, build on actions already taken under the Queensland Climate Transition Strategy and Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy.

Key initiatives and commitments that support climate action across the Queensland Government include:

- establishing a State-owned clean electricity generator, CleanCo;
- investing \$145 million to support three Renewable Energy Zones across Queensland;
- investing \$500 million in a Renewable Energy Fund to increase public ownership of commercial renewable projects and supporting infrastructure; and
- investing through the \$500 million Land Restoration Fund to reduce emissions and generate new job and revenue sources for Queensland's rural, regional and First Nations communities, while also delivering environmental benefits such as improved water quality and enhanced biodiversity.

Other key initiatives include:

- facilitating the development of a sustainable hydrogen industry in Queensland through the Queensland Hydrogen Industry Strategy;
- delivery of the Queensland Electric Vehicle Strategy and the completion of Queensland's Electric Superhighway, the longest electric superhighway in a single State; and
- reducing energy costs across Queensland State schools through the Advancing Clean Energy Schools and Cooler Cleaner Schools Programs.

The Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy is addressing the risks of climate change through:

- the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils program (41 councils participating) and the QCoast2100 program (31 councils participating);
- supporting the Queensland Government to manage its climate risks through the Queensland Climate Ready program;
- providing high-resolution climate projection data and resources via the online Queensland Future Climate Dashboard; and
- supporting sector action through a co-investment program to implement priority actions identified in Sector Adaptation Plans.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 8

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister detail the expenditure of the 70% of waste levy revenue that is being reinvested?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Prior to the introduction of the Queensland waste disposal levy on 1 July 2019, the Palaszczuk Government committed to reinvesting 70 per cent of revenue generated through the waste levy over the first three years back into waste management and resource recovery programs. The revenue generated from the levy has been allocated to annual payments to councils, scheme start-up and operational costs, industry programs and other environmental priorities.

Annual payments of \$143.5 million were made to councils for 2019-20, prior to the start of the levy year from the 2018-19 budget.

During 2019-20, the Department of Environment and Science spent \$21.86 million on levy implementation and compliance, including funding allocated to programs such as the:

- industry based, \$6 million Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Package;
- introduction of the Tackling Plastic Waste: Queensland's Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan; and
- development of environmental initiatives under the \$6 million Community Sustainability Action Grant Program.

The Queensland Government is also rolling out the \$100 million Resource Recovery Industry Development Program over three years. This Program supports projects and initiatives that, for example, divert waste from landfill and reduce stockpiling to revolutionise our State's resource recovery industries and importantly create jobs.

There are significant opportunities within the waste sector for jobs generation, given that recycling creates three times more jobs than landfill. Our government is leveraging these opportunities with the recent announcement of almost \$27 million in recycling projects under the Resource Recovery Industry Development Program including projects addressing organic waste, construction and demolition waste and other priority waste streams including tyres, plastics, glass and textiles.

The department was allocated \$178.65 million of waste levy funds for the 2020-21 financial year. This funding will:

- provide annual payments to councils of an estimated \$143.7 million in 2020-21;
- allow a continuation of existing programs including the Regional Recycling Transport Assistance Package, and the development of further strategies and action plans under the Waste Strategy; and
- allow commencement of additional industry programs including the \$3 million Charitable Recyclers Rebate Program, and the \$1 million Local Government Levy Ready Grant Program Round 2.

The waste levy underpins the Queensland Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy which outlines the pathway for our state to significantly improve resource recovery in an effort to become a zero waste society.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 9

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister provide details of fire management work undertaken by QPWS, including how many hectares of planned burns were carried out in 2019-20?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to support bushfire management in our national parks and State forests, to reduce the risk of bushfire to the neighbouring communities. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is responsible for approximately 13 million hectares across Queensland.

Public safety is the highest consideration in all fire management activities while balancing fire management obligations. Managing Queensland's bushfire risk is a shared responsibility and collaboration occurs with land holders, emergency services, First Nations peoples, communities and neighbours.

QPWS has exceeded its annual target of completing planned burns on over 600,000 hectares – more than 5 per cent of the QPWS-managed estate, every year since 2009. In preparation for the 2020 bushfire season, QPWS completed over 700,000 hectares of planned burns on the QPWS-managed estate exceeding its annual target. It has also exceeded its target to treat 90 per cent of the scheduled Protection Zones each year since the target was introduced.

QPWS has around 750 trained fire staff and about 360 light attack and 33 medium attack fire appliances.

QPWS undertakes annual bushfire risk mitigation activities as part of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services Operation Cool Burn and actively participates in all relevant Bushfire Management Groups.

In response to increased bushfire risk, the Palaszczuk Government allocated an additional \$16 million over four years commencing in 2019-20, and \$2.6 million per year ongoing to provide improved capability for bushfire management in Queensland's parks and forests.

In 2019-20, less than 2 per cent of Queensland wildfires started on National Parks, and 76 per cent of these were contained within the National Park boundaries.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 10

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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:

Will the Minister outline what fire management preparations were undertaken on K'gari (Fraser Island)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) management of fire is guided by a comprehensive fire management system. Fire management strategies are developed for each protected area and are underpinned by nationally recognised Bioregional Planned Burn Guidelines. The Guidelines incorporate scientific methodologies with traditional burning approaches to inform fire management activities undertaken by QPWS.

Protection of life and property is the highest consideration in all QPWS fire management activities, followed by the conservation of natural ecological systems.

Fire management is always a joint effort with QPWS firefighters working alongside the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, rural fire brigades, First Nations peoples, neighbours, and members of the community.

Since 2016, QPWS has treated in excess of 60,000 hectares through planned burning on K'gari (Fraser Island). This equates to a treated area of just under 13,000 hectares or roughly 8 per cent of the Island each year.

In advance of the 2020 fire season, QPWS undertook planned protection burns at Happy Valley, Orchid Beach West and Platypus Bay Ocean Lake; with \$400,000 allocated for undertaking fire break and track maintenance on the southern network firebreaks and Northern Road. In addition, the Rural Fire Service undertook a planned burn at Kingfisher Bay Resort. Additional fire preparedness works were completed at Cathedral Beach, Waddy Point, Woralie, Platypus Bay, Orchid Beach and the mulching of Northern Road.

In response to increased bushfire risk, the Queensland Government allocated an additional \$16 million over four years commencing in 2019-20, and \$2.6 million per year ongoing to provide improved capability for bushfire management in Queensland's parks and forests.

QPWS works in a close partnership with the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation in the management of K'gari, including conducting pre and post burn cultural assessments of targeted planned burn areas, jointly contributing to burn tactics and parameters of each burn, and trained Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation firefighters participate in the burns.

As the recent Royal Commission identified, the impacts of climate change, such as weather events that caused the 2018 and 2019 bushfires, are forecast to become increasingly common and more severe.

QPWS is continually adapting to the changing fire landscape, burning earlier in the planned burn season and moving to an approach of conducting planned burns when conditions are suitable rather than locking into seasons.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 11

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS—

Will the Minister provide a detailed breakdown of budgeted and actual investment in the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program (in table format per financial year) for 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21?)

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Reef Water Quality is a five year program between 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Financial investment in the Program is presented in Annual Investment Plans and Annual Investment Reports which are publically available on the Queensland Government website at: <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/coasts-waterways/reef/reef-program>.

The Annual Investment Plan outlines the anticipated spend for the current financial year. The Annual Investment Report publishes the actual spend that occurred during the previous financial year.

For the 2017-18 financial year, the budgeted expenditure was \$63.99 million and the actual expenditure was \$43.37 million.

For the 2018-19 financial year, the budgeted expenditure was \$69.36 million and the actual expenditure was \$68.92 million.

For the 2019-20 financial year, the budgeted expenditure was \$78.22 million and the actual expenditure was \$58.21 million. The respective Annual Investment Report in will be published in early 2021.

For the 2020-21 financial year, the budgeted expenditure is \$64.28 million and the actual expenditure will be finalised at the end of the financial year.

Budget allocations are not always able to be fully expended in the year allocated. Reasons for this vary, for example, project start up time usually results in a project running for only part of a financial year due to procurement, contracting and recruitment processes.

Additionally, the Reef catchments are subject to extreme weather events and contracted milestones may be delayed due to cyclones, flooding and other events.

Funds that have not been expended have generally been reprofiled to future financial years so that the overall five year program commitment is achieved.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 12

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Will the Minister advise in relation to the Land Restoration Fund (by financial year in table format) the amount of: a) government funds expended, b) private sector funds expended, and c) the amount of Australian Carbon Credits Units issued for 2018-19 and 2019-20 and budgeted for 2020-21?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Land Restoration Fund is a flagship program, which is the first of its kind in Australia. As such, significant effort is being put into its initial establishment.

Approximately \$13.96 million has been expended in establishing the Land Restoration Fund including \$1.3 million for pilot projects in the 2019-20 financial year, market development activities, rebates for landholders and project proponents, set up of the Land Restoration Fund Trust (LRF Trust) and administration.

In 2020, the first investments have been made by the LRF Trust, with contracts of nearly \$93 million being established. Approximately \$7.9 million is expected to be paid out of the LRF Trust to proponents in the 2020-21 financial year.

The initial investment through the LRF Trust is estimated to be leveraging \$5.8 million of private sector expenditure in the 2020-21 financial year.

Carbon farming projects are usually credited with Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) over a 25-year period. The Land Restoration Fund only funds new projects, therefore the majority of projects are not mature enough to have ACCUs credited. Round 1 projects will result in the purchase of over 1.86 million ACCUs.

162 ACCUs have been issued in the 2020-21 financial year.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 13

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS -

Will the Minister advise the total annual expenditure relating to conferences, workshops, catering and other hospitality expenses by departments and agencies under the administration of the Minister for 2019-20 and the budgeted amount of 2020-21?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The total annual expenditure relating to conferences, workshops, catering and other hospitality expenses by departments and agencies under the administration of the Minister for 2019-20 was \$822,576. This includes \$8,294 relating to Arts Queensland, and the Corporate Administration Agency.

This expenditure facilitates the department's engagement with the community and key delivery partners including local governments, First Nations groups and landholders. It also supports longstanding programs, such as the Young Tall Poppies Science Award hosted by the Queensland Chief Scientist.

The revised budget for 2020-21 is \$490,000 and this includes \$2,220 for Arts Queensland for the five-month period to 30 November 2020. This represents a savings contribution of 40%.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 14

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Will the Minister detail the percentage of problem crocodiles that are resolved within (a) 1 business day, (b) 5 business days, (c) 10 business days, (e) 20 business days and (f) more than 20 business days?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

During the 2019-20 financial year, the Department of Environment and Science resolved problem crocodiles within the following timelines:

- 60% resolved within 1 business day;
- 70% resolved within 5 business days;
- 71% resolved within 10 business days;
- 78% resolved within 20 business days; and
- 22% resolved in more than 20 business days.

It is important to keep in mind with these percentages that the figures increase because the total numbers accumulate across each time bracket (i.e. the same crocodiles that are counted as part of the 60% that are resolved within 1 business day are also counted as part of the 78% that are resolved within 20 business days).

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 15

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Will the Minister provide a detailed breakdown of budgeted and actual expenditure on IT per financial year for 2018–19, and 2019–20?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Department of Environment and Science's oversight, prioritisation and monitoring of delivery and performance of the department's digital and IT portfolio is actively managed by the Digital Investment Sub-Committee reporting to the Director-General.

In 2018-19, the department had 17 digital and IT initiatives which had either commenced or were being continued with a total budget of \$17.96 million. The total actual expenditure in 2018-19 for projects in flight was \$15.58 million.

In 2019-20, the department had 24 digital and IT initiatives which had either commenced or were being continued with a total budget of \$22.99 million. The total actual expenditure in 2019-20 for projects in flight was \$22.31 million.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 16

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Will the Minister outline the number of fraud and/or misconduct investigations currently being undertaken either by the department or the Crime and Corruption Commission, regarding the employees or contractors with specific reference to the overall types of complaints and the number of staff currently on suspension as a result of these investigations?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

It is not appropriate to comment on investigations currently being undertaken by either the Department of Environment and Science or the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC).

The Public Service Commission meets its legislative requirement under section 88N of the *Public Service Act 2008* to publish annual conduct and performance data by 30 September each year.

A link to this report is below:

<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/2019-20-conduct-and-performance-data>.

The Public Service Commission data does not include matters involving corrupt conduct.

Corrupt conduct matters fall under the jurisdiction of the CCC and a corruption allegations data dashboard is published at [Corruption allegations data dashboard | CCC - Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland](#).

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 17

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Will the Minister advise for the 2019-20 actual financial year and 2020-21 budgeted financial year (in table format by individual financial year) (a) the headcount number of contractors and labour hire staff in the department, (b) all expenses associated with contractors and labour hire staff in the department and (c) headcount number of staff seconded to the department from any other State Government entity?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

| | Headcount of Contractors/Labour Hire staff | Expense amount of Contractors/Labour Hire staff | # Staff seconded from other government agencies |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| 2019-20 Actual | 36 | \$2.15 million | 31 |
| 2020-21 Budget | 13 | \$0.96 million | 11 |

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 18

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS

(a) how much is currently held in the environmental offsets account, (b) how many financial settlement offset payments have been made in this financial year, (c) how many hectares of environmental offsets have been purchased with funds since the environmental offset account was established?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The environmental offsets account holds \$42,071,011 as at 7 December 2020, including 27 settlements totalling \$1.64 million received since 1 July 2020.

Payments totalling \$509,470 have been made from the Offsets Fund since 1 July 2020. Two new contracts have been established for the delivery of offsets in this financial year with a total value of \$1.8 million. Further offsets to the value of approximately \$14 million are currently in the procurement phase with the expectation that contracts will be signed in the current financial year.

Since establishment of the Offsets Fund, 84 hectares of land have been secured for offsets including sites for mangroves and seagrass, aquatic offsets in south east Queensland, and endangered ecosystems and species, with an additional nine projects currently in different stages of delivery.

On 2 October 2020, the Queensland Government released *A review of Queensland Environmental Offsets Framework Consultation and Response Report* (the report). The framework was introduced by the former LNP Government in 2014 and our Government undertook a review following significant concerns raised by stakeholders.

The report summarises key issues raised during the review including a need for improved transparency, reduced complexity, reduced barriers to landholder participation and offset delivery, and greater alignment with the Commonwealth offset policy.

The report also outlines a two phased response to information received during the review:

- Phase 1 will enhance offset delivery partnerships with local government and landholders, improve guidance, and increase the supply of potential offset areas with no increased cost to government or business.
- Phase 2 will commence in early 2021. This phase will identify and assess potential legislative reforms in partnership with other government agencies, a multisector reference group and the community.

With the outcomes of this review into the LNP's framework now underway, Queensland is in a position to improve offset delivery into the future.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 19

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-42 of the SDS-

Can the Minister outline whether the funding available for the Great Barrier Reef includes any independent assessments relating to the harvesting of coral species in the Great Barrier Reef including for commercial, research and biotechnology purposes?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The funding for the Great Barrier Reef outlined in the Service Delivery Statement does not include funding for independent assessments relating to the harvesting of coral species in the Great Barrier Reef. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is responsible for ecological risk assessments of fisheries, including the coral fishery.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Estimates Pre-Hearing Question on Notice

No. 20

Asked on Friday, 4 December 2020

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 2-46 of the SDS regarding the \$10.2 million over four years ending in 2023-24 for projects supporting ecotourism including upgrades to our National Parks and World Heritage Areas-

Can the Minister provide details on funding for each National Park and World Heritage Area in Queensland over the four years?

ANSWER:

I thank the Committee for the question.

The Queensland Government is committed to fostering ecotourism opportunities that support the sustainable growth of the ecotourism industry; provide a positive contribution back to Queensland's natural environment, culture and community; and strengthen the economy.

As part of the \$40 million Healthy Reef, Healthy Environment, Healthy Economy election commitment, the Queensland Government is investing significantly in new ecotourism facilities across regional Queensland.

Ecotourism projects in national parks are required to be in accordance with the Ecotourism Best Practice Development Guidelines. This means they must be in the public interest; ecologically sustainable; and to the greatest possible extent, preserve the land's natural condition and protect its cultural values and resources.

Specifically, \$10.2 million of the funding is being invested in the following five ecotourism related projects on National Parks and World Heritage:

- \$2.8 million to upgrade and build new nature-based visitor experiences of the campground and walking track upgrades at Conondale National Park;
- \$4.5 million to upgrade and build new nature-based visitor experiences of the next stage of the Ngaro Walking Track on Whitsunday Island;
- \$1.25 million to develop Central Station as a cultural tourism centre with camping and bush tucker tour on K'gari (Fraser Island);
- \$1.34 million to develop a tourism hub and visitor centre in the Daintree National Park; and
- \$275,000 to provide new cultural offerings in the Gondwana Rainforest with the Traditional Owners.