

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1549

asked on Thursday, 30 November 2006

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MS STONE ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER IN NORTH QUEENSLAND (MR WALLACE)—

### QUESTION:

Will he outline any assistance the State Government is providing to natural resources management groups?

### ANSWER:

The Queensland Government provides significant assistance to a range of natural resource management (NRM) groups in Queensland, including the regional NRM bodies and local volunteer groups.

In 2002 and 2004 respectively, the Queensland Government signed Bilateral Agreements with the Australian Government for the implementation of the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) and the Natural Heritage Trust Extension (the Trust) programs. The programs are based on regional, community-led NRM planning and investment.

Queensland's regional NRM bodies are community-based, non-statutory bodies and are either an Incorporated Association under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1981* or a Limited Company under the *Corporations Act 2001*. They devolve funds for on-ground projects to implement regional NRM plans, accredited by both Governments and addressing high priority issues such as biodiversity, weeds and pests, vegetation management, sustainable agricultural production, water quality and salinity.

There are 14 regions in total, 12 of which have well-established community-based regional NRM bodies with accredited plans. The two other regions of Torres Strait and Cape York have interim arrangements.

Under the NAP and Trust programs, the Queensland Government provides approximately \$138 million of matching inkind and a total of \$89.402 million cash consisting of:

- \$81 million for NAPSWQ;
- \$6.402 million for core operating of the seven Trust-dependent regional NRM bodies from March 2005 to June 2008; and
- \$2 million in Cape York for NHT implementation between 2006/07 and 2007/08.

In addition, the Queensland Government supports the 16,000 volunteers involved in 293 community NRM groups across the State (e.g. Landcare/Bushcare/Coastcare).

The Department of Natural Resources and Water supports the volunteer sector by:

- funding insurance coverage for personal accident, public liability and professional indemnity;
- providing \$200,000 per year in core funding to Queensland Water and Land Carers Inc. (QWaLC), the volunteer sector's representative body; and
- funding the '\$100,000 Community Activity Grants program to help volunteer groups to promote their work locally during Natural Resources Week.