

**Question on Notice
No. 419
Asked on 29 March 2006**

QUESTION:

MRS MENKENS asked the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women (Ms Boyle)—

With reference to the Government's Biodiversity Incentives Tender—

- (1) What are the range of incentives and structures available to landholders?
- (2) What is the cost to date of these incentives from 2003 to 2006 (reported separately)?
- (3) To whom have incentives been paid?

ANSWER:

- (1) The Biodiversity Incentives Tender offered financial incentives to landholders in return for protecting and actively managing natural areas on their property with high conservation significance.

Landholders tendered for a range of activities to ensure the natural values of their property would be maintained through a perpetual nature refuge agreement. They included:

- fencing to protect environmentally sensitive areas;
- establishing watering points away from sensitive areas like artesian springs;
- eradicating or controlling weeds and pests;
- establishing a property management plan; or
- managing particular areas to allow for natural regeneration.

- (2) The EPA's Biodiversity Incentives Tender was a pilot program that began in March 2005. When completed in May 2006, it will have coordinated the distribution of over \$500,000 to Queensland landholders to help manage approximately 123,000 hectares of the State's most significant biodiversity values through perpetual nature refuge agreements. The Biodiversity Incentives Tender was funded by the Commonwealth Biodiversity Hotspots Program (\$254,000), the Queensland Vegetation Incentives Program (\$214,693), and three NRM Bodies (\$136,176).
- 3) Financial incentives will be paid to successful landholders who participated in the tender process and are willing to enter into a perpetual nature refuge agreement with the State. Successful landholders range from primary producers, eco tourism ventures through to national conservancies

The 'cost effectiveness' of the Biodiversity Incentives Tender at just under \$5 per hectare, the response from landholders, and the cooperation between multiple programs, makes it one of the most successful conservation tenders of its type in Australia.

I am pleased to advise that the success of the initial pilot program has drawn further strong support from the Commonwealth Government, Natural Resource Management Bodies and rural and conservation groups. Officers of the EPA are currently coordinating the development of a unique, collaborative program that will draw on the success of the Biodiversity Incentives Tender and continue to support the partnership for conservation the Queensland Government is building with many landholders across Queensland.