

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 546

asked on Thursday, 20 April 2006

MRS SULLIVAN ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND WATER (MR PALASZCZUK)—

QUESTION:

What is the impact of feral cats on Queensland's natural resources and what action has been taken to address this problem?

ANSWER:

Feral cats have a significant impact on Queensland's natural resources, biodiversity and human welfare. This impact has recently been estimated at \$146 million dollars across Australia.

Australia has approximately 14 million feral cats that inhabit the entire mainland and most islands. Their impact is predominately environmental with feral cats contributing to the extinction or significant local reductions of several native mammals and birds.

Consequently feral cats have been declared as a Class 2 pest species under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, and therefore all landowners have a responsibility under the Act to take reasonable steps to keep their land free of feral cats.

Control methods available include shooting, trapping and exclusion fencing, although exclusion fencing is generally only considered for small and defined areas, such as the Currawinya Bilby Project. Currently there is no chemical control tool for feral cats. However, the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Water has lodged an application with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority for the registration of a poison (sodium fluoroacetate) otherwise known as 1080 for use in Queensland.

The management of feral cats is also included in pest management plans for local government areas and State-controlled lands.

The declaration of feral cats and their inclusion in the development of pest management plans is consistent with and supports the National Threat Abatement Plan for Predation by Feral Cats.