

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 446

asked on Wednesday, 14 March 2007

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the last dot point on page 10 of his department's Ministerial Portfolio Statement which refers to the regional natural resource management bodies—

Will he provide an update on the delivery of the programs in the Torres Strait?

ANSWER:

Natural Heritage Trust (Trust) and National Landcare Program (NLP) funding of more than \$2,400,000 has been approved for the Torres Strait, over the last 3 years.

In December 2005, Commonwealth and Queensland Government Ministers approved the *Land and Sea Management Strategy for Torres Strait* and funding for the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) for a new Land and Sea Management Unit. The TSRA has been developing and delivering projects to assist the region in achieving the priority management actions identified in the Strategy.

Delivery of the Trust and NLP programs is progressing in line with the Government's commitment. The Land and Sea Unit is fully operational and positive feedback has been received from Community Councils about advanced projects.

Projects being implemented include: support for Prescribed Bodies Corporate to participate in local natural resource management; surveying and control of marine debris and seagrass monitoring on inner islands; community education about sustainable water use (in partnership with the Island Coordination Council); Badu Island land and sea management (ranger program); investigation into systemic causes of island erosion (in partnership with James Cook University); Ugar Island water hydrology - ensuring sustainable use of freshwater lens (in partnership with the Island Coordination Council); engagement of Papua New Guinea in shared natural resource management issues (in particular dugong and sea turtles); National Landcare Coordinator, providing training and advice on horticultural and sustainable land use; and Lantana eradication and native revegetation on Darnley, Yorke and Murray Islands (funded through the National Landcare Program).