

**Question on Notice  
No. 110  
Asked on Thursday, 14 February 2008**

QUESTION:

**MR WEIGHTMAN** asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) — Will he outline the Government's position in relation to artificial reefs in Moreton Bay?

ANSWER:

The science associated with artificial reefs has progressed enormously in recent years. Therefore, this Government believes that we need to move forward with developing artificial reefs to help ensure the resilience and longevity of the great marine environment we have in Moreton Bay Marine Park.

As part of the Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan review, the Government has allocated \$1 million towards researching, planning and constructing trial artificial reefs. This trial project will run in parallel with the Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan review.

Research conducted by my department in the information-gathering phase of the zoning plan review identified crowding as one of the main issues facing marine park users.

The Government has listened to this concern and committed to the trial artificial reef program to provide alternative areas for recreational use.

A project officer has been appointed to work with marine park stakeholders to examine best practice artificial reef design, construction and location. The overall aim of this project is to enhance recreational fishing opportunities.

My department also recently hosted a workshop with speakers from the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and a recreational fishing social scientist from James Cook University.

This workshop was an important first step to identify critical issues associated with implementing a trial artificial reef program in south-east Queensland.

The placement of artificial reefs will require considerable research to determine the most appropriate locations to ensure there are benefits to both the community and the environment. Artificial reefs can help enhance fishing and recreational experiences. It is also well documented that well-designed artificial reefs can help restore and replenish areas if they are well-placed.

For example, a focus of the artificial reef program will be to investigate re-establishing reefs in areas previously subjected to lime dredging for concrete production.

Any artificial reefs deployed as part of this program will be purpose-built structures. This program is not a green light for dumping rubbish into the marine environment. It is worth remembering that anyone caught illegally dumping items into the marine environment faces heavy fines and even prosecution.

I would also like to recognise the importance of stakeholders in this project. Discussions I have had with recreational fishing groups have welcomed the Government's initiative to progress an artificial reef program. We will be involving numerous groups in this project as it progresses.