

Question on Notice
No. 1592
Asked on Wednesday, 29 October 2008

QUESTION:

MR GIBSON asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) –

With reference to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Crocs in Space program—

- (1) Will he detail where crocodiles were translocated to under the program and advise their current locations?
- (2) Will he provide details of any other EPA programs that involve the translocation of crocodiles and where those crocodiles were translocated to under those programs?

ANSWER:

Since 2003, a total of five estuarine crocodiles have been translocated and released back to the wild. Three of these animals were translocated under the 'Crocs in Space' project (which ceased in 2007) and the other two under subsequent EPA crocodile research and management activities. One of the latter two was tracked by radio transmitter rather than by satellite.

The release locations and dates of each animal were:

1. 50 kilometres south of the Nesbit River, approximately 310 kilometres north of Cooktown, on 14 September 2003.
2. Temple Bay (Eastern Cape York Peninsula) approximately 580 kilometres from Cooktown and 445 kilometres from Weipa by water respectively, on 16 August 2004.
3. Jacksons Lagoon approximately 185 kilometres north of Weipa by water, on 25 August 2004.
4. Bohle River, 20 kilometres north of Townsville by water, on 15 May 2006.
5. Combe Creek, Bowling Green Bay National Park approximately 60 kilometres south of Townsville by water, on 21 August 2008.

The first four of the above crocodiles are believed to be still in the wild; however they are no longer tracked. The last crocodile, known as 'Whitey' was captured and subsequently died as a result of ingesting plastic bags.

The first three crocodiles eventually returned to the location of their capture (one of these was subsequently tracked moving of its own volition approximately 935 kilometres from its capture site to the Flinders River in the Gulf of Carpentaria before transmission ceased).

The fourth crocodile was translocated from its capture site at Alligator Creek approximately 25 kilometres south of Townsville to the Bohle River approximately 20 kilometres north of Townsville. It remained in the Bohle River area for seven months before transmitter failure.