

Question on Notice

No. 346

Asked on 12 March 2008

Mr Moorhead asked the Minister for Education, Training and the Arts (Mr Welford) –

QUESTION:

Will the Minister inform the House of initiatives to involve schools and students in protecting our environment?

ANSWER:

The recent water crisis in Queensland underlines the importance of being environmentally responsible with our limited natural resources. The Bligh Government is tackling climate change across Government so our environment can be sustained for communities of the future.

In response to the drought, we have invested around \$13m to retrofit taps, showers, toilets and swimming pools. This work has allowed our school's water efficiency to be increased substantially. My department will continue to work with schools to identify ways to further decrease water use.

This year, in conjunction with Minister Wilson I launched the EnergyWise Schools Program which will assist our State schools to be more energy efficient and reduce their carbon footprint.

All State schools are required to implement strategies and actions, in partnership with the community and within the school, to reduce their ecological footprint. To support schools in meeting this challenge, I recently launched the Statement on Sustainability for All Queensland Schools – *Enough for all forever*.

The Queensland Environmentally Sustainable School Initiative department supports a network of Queensland Schools by fostering a whole of school approach to sustainability, encompassing professional development and training, environmental audits, curriculum planning and school community education.

Education Queensland also operate 25 Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres across the state who work with our schools to improve energy efficiency, waste minimisation, water conservation and biodiversity through customised programs to over 90 000 students per year.