

**Question on Notice  
No. 1271  
Asked on Wednesday, 16 September 2009**

**MRS MILLER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY (MS JONES)—**

**QUESTION:**

As the department continues to manage the parks and wildlife estate to build resilience in natural systems—

What actions are being undertaken for the conservation of the turtle species?

**ANSWER:**

Queensland hosts a rich diversity of turtle fauna, being home to 15 species of freshwater turtles and six of the world's seven species of marine turtles.

The Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) leads significant research addressing the population dynamics of our threatened turtles in collaboration with university researchers and their students. The results of this research are used to inform Departmental policy and decision-making about management.

DERM has allocated over \$2.5 million towards research on turtles including the world recognised work of Col Limpus.

Our national parks and similar protected estate provide strong habitat protection to all the important marine turtle breeding sites in eastern Australia.

No other government in the world has delivered the high level of protection for marine turtles that Queensland provides, with 97 percent of the east coast of Queensland being managed as marine parks.

The southern Great Barrier Reef green turtle population was excessively harvested up until 1950. Monitoring studies by DERM and volunteers are finally showing that this green turtle population is in a recovery phase after decades of strong habitat and species protection.

Predation of turtle eggs by feral predators remains one of the most significant pervasive threats to the survival of many species of freshwater and marine turtles. DERM staff are collaborating with community groups and government agencies to protect the eggs of threatened turtles from predation and to control pest species within national parks.

Marine park zoning plans provide for 'go slow' areas for turtles and dugong, to protect the animals and their habitats from the impact of boats. Go slow areas are in place in Moreton Bay and the Great Sandy, and rangers can impose \$400 on-the-spot fines for infringements.

The internationally renowned Mon Repos Conservation Park near Bundaberg attracts some 30,000 visitors each breeding season to view nesting and hatchling turtles. This Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) tourism program plays a vital link in connecting people with nature.

Finally, in response to the newly recognised threat of altered night-time light horizons over the growing coastal town of Bargara threatening the successful breeding of loggerhead turtles, DERM has initiated an innovative and creative project "Cut the Glow to Help Turtles Go". The project aims to raise community awareness of marine turtle nesting and hatching behaviour and conservation, with an emphasis on the effects caused by artificial lights and light glows.