

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 140

asked on Thursday, 6 March 2014

MS TRAD ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE PROTECTION (MR POWELL)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister detail all environmental offsets registered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection under each of the five offset policies in effect, by year, from 2010 to 2013?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government currently administers a total of five offset policies. These policies include the overarching Queensland Government *Environmental Offsets Policy* that provides a supporting framework for the management of offsets throughout the state, as well as four specific issue policies that are administered across three government departments.

Currently the approach to registering environmental offsets has been inconsistent. The Environmental Offsets Bill 2014 currently before the house that all environmental offsets be centrally registered with the department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

The *Biodiversity Offsets Policy* is administered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (the department). The *Policy for Vegetation Management Offsets* is administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. The *Marine Fish Habitat Offsets Policy* is administered by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The *Offsets for Net Gain of Koala Habitat in South East Queensland Policy* is administered by the department and delivered in conjunction with local governments. Under the SEQ Koala Conservation State Planning Regulatory Provisions and the State Planning Policy 2/10 local governments have been assigned the responsibility of assessing and maintaining koala offsets in south east Queensland. Records relating to koala offsets are therefore held by the relevant local governments, and are not included in this response.

In addition, the Coordinator General may apply offset conditions under the *Queensland Biodiversity Offsets Policy* for major projects (under the *State Development Public Works Organisation Act 1971*) at his discretion.

The government considers an offset 'registered' once it has been legally secured or a financial settlement payment has been made. This is because some offsets may take many months of assessment and negotiation before being legally secured and also some projects change or do not proceed. There are therefore a number of potential

offsets in the final stages of assessment which are not registered until they are legally secured or financial payments made.

The table below outlines the information provided by the respective State agencies administering the offset policies on the number of offsets in effect over the period 2010-2013.

Policy/Measure	2010	2011	2012	2013
<i>Queensland Biodiversity Offsets Policy</i>				
Number	Not in effect	0 Came into effect Oct 11	1	2
Financial contributions (\$)	Not in effect	0 Came into effect Oct 11	84,000	270,660
Area (ha)	Not in effect	0 Came into effect Oct 11	0	15.7
<i>Policy for Vegetation Management Offsets</i>				
Number	9	10	7	8
Financial contributions (\$)	Not available as an option	0	0	0
Area (ha)	313	110	81	178
<i>Marine Fish Habitat Offsets Policy</i>				
Number	3	19	20	1
Financial contributions (\$)	5,048	6,583,266	459,201	3,000
Area (ha)	0	0	0	0
<i>Coordinator General</i>				
Number	0	0	0	2
Financial contributions (\$)	0	0	0	0
Area (ha)	0	0	0	112