

Question on Notice

No. 1945

Asked on Thursday, 28 November 2019

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister explain why the Reef 2050 plan lists just \$50,000 in funding for the Indigenous to conduct controlled burns on a fraction of the 250,594km of Great Barrier Reef catchments under recognised native title?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) released in 2015, the Reef 2050 Plan Investment Framework released in 2016, the updated Reef 2050 Plan released in 2018, the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan released in 2018, and the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan investments make no reference to fire management or controlled burning practices. The Member may be referring to the investment from the Great Barrier Reef Foundation under its Commonwealth Government Reef Trust grant agreement. In which case the question should be redirected to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy or the Foundation.

In contrast, the Queensland Government strongly invests in First Nations fire management practices.

The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) works in partnership with several First Nations groups to implement fire management in protected areas and on country that incorporates the ecological knowledge and burning practices of First Nations people. QPWS recognises the significant benefits that partnering with First Nations people brings to both parties and is actively looking to identify other locations where traditional burning could be conducted.

In addition, the Queensland Government is supporting First Nations people to deliver on-country fire management activities through grant funding of more than \$11 million per year under the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program. In 2018-19, Indigenous Land and Sea ranger teams reported fire management practices across more than 710,000 hectares of country.

The Land Restoration Fund (LRF) is a \$500 million commitment to grow Queensland's carbon farming industry by supporting innovative land management projects that deliver carbon offsets and co-benefits, including First Nations benefits and fire management. For example, the LRF granted \$340,000 to Gidarjil Development Corporation to trial a collective carbon farming project that uses traditional mosaic and fire-stick farming practices to control non-native plant species in the Burnett Mary catchment.