

Question on Notice

No. 1285

Asked on Tuesday, 8 November 2022

MR S ANDREW ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND YOUTH AFFAIRS (HON M SCANLON)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Department of Environment and Science having blown out their budget by \$62m—

Will the Minister curtail the departments spending on the purchase of properties for the protected areas estates, at least until the department is back within budget?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

I believe the Member is referring to statements made by certain media outlets on 13 October 2022, which alleged that the Department of Environment and Science had over-spent its budget by \$62 million. These reports were not accurate.

The figure referred to was not an overspend but additional funding approved to the department for delivery of services in 2021-22. Most notably, this related to the Government's decision to bring forward four years of payments to local councils as part of Queensland's Resource Recovery Sector Transformation Initiative. The advance payments allow councils to improve their forward planning for infrastructure and services to reduce waste being disposed to landfill and ensure no impacts on households from the Queensland Waste Levy.

In October 2020, the Palaszczuk Government released Queensland's Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030, a 10-year plan for supporting the growth, management and sustainability of national parks and other protected areas.

To support implementation of the Strategy, through the 2022-23 State Budget, the Queensland Government allocated \$262.5 million over four years to protected area expansion and the subsequent management of newly acquired protected areas.

The department is in active negotiations to acquire a number of properties across Queensland for future addition to the protected area estate.