

Question on Notice

No. 643

Asked on Tuesday, 23 May 2023

DR A MACMAHON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND MINISTER FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to emails obtained from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade stating 'Paris visit by [redacted] Qld Government_ will be in Paris from 7-10 February 2023 to meet with UNESCO and members of the World Heritage Committee. This will be a key opportunity to discuss Australia's actions and response in relation to the recommendations of the UNESCO and IUCN Great Barrier Reef Reactive Monitoring Mission report, released in November 2022'—

Will the Minister advise (a) which government ministers and officials constituted this delegation and (b) what actions is the government committed to in response to this report?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

- (a) The Queensland Government was represented in meetings with UNESCO and members of the World Heritage Committee in Paris in February 2023 by the Deputy Director-General, Environment and Heritage Policy and Programs Division, Department of Environment and Science.
- (b) The Australian and Queensland Governments have committed to several actions in response to the Great Barrier Reef Reactive Monitoring Mission Report (the Report).

On 10 March 2023, the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water provided the World Heritage Centre with the Australian and Queensland Governments' responses to the Report. The response provides a summary of key policy changes and commitments that occurred between the Reactive Monitoring Mission visit in March 2022 and the release of the Report in November 2022. The response is available on the UNESCO website at: <https://whc.unesco.org/document/198832>.

In addition to this, on 5 June 2023, the Australian and Queensland Governments jointly announced further actions to protect the Great Barrier Reef including committing over \$160 million to significantly reduce net fishing and other high risk fishing activities impacting the Reef. This includes ensuring the Reef is gillnet free by mid-2027. These actions demonstrate significant commitments to protect the Reef and respond to core recommendations of the Report.

The Australian and Queensland Governments also outlined commitments on improving Reef water quality and addressing climate change, including to reach water quality improvement targets by 2025, by significantly reducing pollutant discharges from farmers and industrialists, and restoring flora and fauna in Reef drainage basins.