

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 69  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1  
**Programme:** Environment Assessment and Compliance Division  
**Topic:** ABBOT POINT PROJECT - OFFSETS  
**Hansard Page:** N/A  
**Question Date:** 17 June 2014  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Waters asked:**

The EPBC Offsets Policy states that offsets must be additional to what is already agreed to under other schemes or programs. Does the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013 meet the definition of a “scheme or program?”

If so, since the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan aims to “ensure to that by 2020 the quality of water entering the reef from broadscale land use has no detrimental impact on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef”, how can water quality offset be regarded as additional?

**Answer:**

Yes. The *Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013* (Reef Plan) is ‘a collaborative programme of coordinated projects and partnerships designed to improve the quality of water in the Great Barrier Reef’.

Under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 Environmental Offsets Policy*, any offsets required under the approval conditions of approval for the Abbot Point Capital Dredging project, require the funding of activities additional to those currently funded through programmes under the *Reef Water Quality Protection Plan 2013*.