

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

Question No: 81
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: National Reserve System - Indigenous Protected Areas
Hansard Page: 129
Question Date: 19 October 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Singh asked:

Senator SINGH: I want to ask questions in relation to IPAs, Indigenous protected areas. Am I in the right area?

Mr Thompson: Program 1.1 was probably the program area there, rather than environmental regulation. As you might know, Indigenous protected areas are now a program administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Dr de Brouwer: They are funded from the Natural Heritage Trust, but they are now within the—

Mr Thompson: The Natural Heritage Trust, yes.

Senator SINGH: I thought it was on the Department of the Environment's website—the 60 declared Indigenous protected areas.

Dr de Brouwer: They are part of the National Reserve System.

Mr Thompson: They are part of the National Reserve System, so the policy responsibility relates to the department in terms of the carriage that we have of the National Reserve System. The program is administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Senator SINGH: So I cannot ask those questions here?

Mr Thompson: You can ask some questions, and we can attempt to answer them, but really it depends on the chair.

Dr de Brouwer: It depends on the question too.

Senator SINGH: I want to know if there has been an increase in IPAs over the last five years.

Mr Thompson: I would have to take that on notice—and compared to what period?

Senator SINGH: I also want to know how many applications for IPAs have been received by the department in the last year.

Mr Thompson: None, because we do not administer the program.

Answer:

There has been an increase of 32 Indigenous Protected Areas from 40 to 72 over the last five years.