

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee**
Answers to questions on notice
Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities portfolio
Additional Budget Estimates, February 2013

Program: Division or Agency: 2.1: EQD **Question No:** 030
Topic: Synthetic greenhouse gases –
Treasury forecast
Proof Hansard Page and Date 6
or Written Question: (12/2/13)

Senator Birmingham asked:

Senator BIRMINGHAM: Was there an estimate of what had been expected on a quarterly basis, or was that \$190 million forecast simply over an annual basis?

Dr Wright: That was an annual basis.

Senator BIRMINGHAM: How many tonnes would that equate to?

Dr Wright: I do not have that figure with me. We would have to double-check with our colleagues in Treasury.

Answer:

The revenue estimate of \$190.0 million for 2012/13 for the equivalent carbon price levy on synthetic greenhouse gases was prepared by the Treasury. Treasury has advised that the estimate of the number of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions can be calculated by dividing \$190.0 million by the carbon price of \$23 per tonne for 2012/13.

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Program: Division or Agency: 2.1: EQD **Question No:** 031
Topic: UNEP global chemical report
Proof Hansard Page and Date 7
or Written Question: (12/2/13)

Senator Singh asked:

Senator SINGH: Is the department aware of the UNEP global chemical report that was released last September? It had a number of general recommendations and specific recommendations within it. What are the recommendations that Australia is considering adopting in that report? You might want to take that on notice—there are a few recommendations in there.

...

Mr McNee: We will take that on notice, Senator.

Answer:

The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (the department) is aware of the UNEP Global Chemicals Outlook: Towards Sound Management of Chemicals Report (the Report). The recommendations are aimed at fostering sound management of chemicals globally, noting that different countries will be at different points in relation to that goal. The Report makes recommendations aimed at raising the awareness and attention of policy-makers and key stakeholders in order to strengthen the implementation of Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the chemicals related conventions and accelerate the achievement of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation goal that by 2020, chemicals will be produced and used in ways that minimise significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health. Two sets of recommendations emanate from the key findings and conclusions of the report. The first set provides general recommendations on institutional, economic and development policy related issues. The second set focuses on more specific, technical and managerial types of recommendations to address the main challenges raised in this Report related to trends and indicators, economic implications and instruments and approaches. Australia, being a developed country and a member of the OECD chemicals programme has a relatively advanced regulatory system for assessing the risks of chemicals.

We recognise that sound management involves being able to deal with chemicals through whole of life including discharge and release to the environment as well as through disposal of wastes containing chemicals (such as electrical equipment, foams, furnishings, plastics and the like). We also understand that the effects of some chemicals can be intergenerational. The department is engaged on initiatives and policies at a range of levels aimed at the sound management of chemicals, including:

- Engagement in the chemical multilateral environment agreements such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Waste and its Disposal, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the upcoming instrument on Mercury, the Minamata Treaty.
- Monitoring of certain chemicals in air in Australia as part of international obligations under the Stockholm Convention.
- Progressing reform priorities set out by the Council of Australian Governments under its Measures to Develop a Seamless National Economy regarding better management of environmental risks posed by chemicals.
- The National Waste Policy, which provides the basis for collaboration among jurisdictions towards producing less waste for disposal and managing waste as a resource to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits. The policy encompasses a wide range of waste types, including hazardous wastes and substances. For example, the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme aims to increase television and computer recycling rates from the current 10 per cent to 80 per cent by 2020/21.

Through these mechanisms and others the department is working to support the Commonwealth Government to better develop Australia's capacity to manage environmental risks caused by chemicals, particularly in terms of waste disposal.

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Program: Division or Agency: 2.1: EQD **Question No:** 032
Topic: National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme – collection rates
Proof Hansard Page and Date or Written Question: 7
(12/2/13)

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:

Senator WHISH-WILSON: ...The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme: perhaps on notice could you give us an update on the number of televisions and computers that have been collected on a state-by-state basis, what sorts of recycling rates that translates to and how that relates to your target of 2010 from 17 per cent to 30 per cent?

...

Mr Thompson: We will take that on notice.

Answer:

The National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme's (the Scheme) first target year for recycling is 2012/13. Industry are required to collect and recycle up to 30 per cent of waste televisions and computers during this first target year. Recycling targets are measured by the weight of product recycled rather than the number of individual televisions or computers.

Approximately 14,700 tonnes of waste televisions and computers had been recycled under the Scheme as of late February 2013, based on figures provided by the Scheme's industry arrangements. This is just over one third of industry's recycling target for 2012/13.

The number of e-waste collection services under the Scheme continues to grow at an increasing pace as the first year of the Scheme's implementation continues. The increase in collection sites is expected to result in increases in the volume of product collected and recycled.

The number of collection sites has grown from two collection sites at the commencement of the Scheme to 54 collection sites by November 2012, and to 200 collection sites nationally by the end of February 2013.

E-waste collection services are now available to communities in the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. A breakdown on the amounts of recycling in each State and Territory is not yet available. That information will be collated and reported by the industry arrangements following the end of the financial year.