

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts  
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	1
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Caring for Country – Research funding		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	10 (28/5/09)		

**Senator SIEWART asked:**

**Ms Rankin**—Probably about \$10 million out of the implementation costs or the administration component of the budget is specifically dedicated to research. We are certainly funding research components of a whole lot of other projects and are receiving applications for research projects, but there is not a specific budget set aside for research beyond that.

**Senator SIEWERT**—Beyond that \$10 million. How does that equate to previous NHT funding that has been allocated for research?

**Ms Rankin**—I would have to take that on notice, sorry.

**Senator SIEWERT**—If you could, because my recollection is that after a while there was some money allocated to research in NHT and there was the strategic reserve that was allocated. Not all states allocated it. I know that in Western Australia we did and at a national level there was a strategy. Different states called it different things. I cannot remember the dollar value that was on that. If you could take that on notice, that would be appreciated.

**Ms Rankin**—I can do that, yes.

**Answer:**

There was no funding specifically allocated for research through either the national, regional or local investment streams under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). While some resource condition monitoring projects with research components were funded through the Strategic Reserve under the Western Australian regional budget, there was not a specific allocation for research as part of this budget.

A review of 2007–08 NHT projects indicates that about \$8.686 million was expended on projects which included a strong research emphasis.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	2
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Sustainable agriculture – approved projects		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	11 (28/5/09)		

**Senator SIEWERT**—I know it will be announced, but could I ask, on notice, that the list of projects approved be provided to the committee?

**Ms Rankin**—That will not be a problem. The list of projects will be published on the website as well under our rules, but we can do that.

**Answers:**

At the time of this response being prepared, the following lists of projects (Attachment A) have been approved and announced. Further announcements are expected shortly and will be listed on the Caring for our Country website at [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au)

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**Attachment A**

**Table 1: Caring for our Country Competitive Project funding announced in July 2009**

<b>State</b>	<b>Funding recipients</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Funding Approved</b>
NAT	Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance	Indigenous partnerships for better management of Australia's remote northern coastal and aquatic environments - The Saltwater People Network	\$2,400,000
NAT	Department of Primary Industries - Victoria	Community implementation of biological control of weeds across south-eastern Australia	\$2,176,448
NAT	Northern Gulf Resource Management Group Limited	Local Indigenous Solutions for a Global Problem in Northern Australia	\$2,800,000
NAT	SA Arid Lands Natural Resource Management Board	Understanding and managing critical refugia in the arid lands of central northern Australia	\$713,834
NAT	Birds Australia	Woodland Birds for Biodiversity	\$1,500,000
NAT	Ninti One Ltd (Financial management company for The Desert Knowledge CRC)	Feral camel management to increase biodiversity and cultural values in remote Australia.	\$19,000,000
NAT	Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre	RHD Boost: Import and evaluate new RHD virus strains to strengthen rabbit biocontrol	\$1,515,000
NAT	World Wide Fund for Nature Australia	A strategic regional plan in Australia's global biodiversity hotspot – Phase Two: on-ground implementation	\$1,500,000
NAT	North East Catchment Management Authority	Improving Landscape Scale Conservation of Threatened Grassy Woodland Ecosystems in the Greater Murray-Goulburn Catchment	\$3,000,000
NSW	NSW Sugar Milling Co-op	Banking soil carbon to reduce fertiliser application in the NSW sugar industry.	\$54,500
NSW	Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority	Meeting multiple targets through Increased Coastal Community Engagement along the New South Wales coastline.	\$3,457,394
NSW	Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority	Improving Water Quality in the Botany Bay "Hot Spot"	\$1,580,000
NSW	Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority	The Hunter Coastal Hotspot and Ramsar Improvement Project	\$1,470,000
NSW	Tweed Shire Council	Supporting Sustainable Agriculture in the Tweed	\$99,280
NT	Natural Resource Management Board (NT)	Coordinated response to on-ground control of Mimosa pigra in the Daly and Moyle Catchments.	\$1,420,000
NT	Marthakal Homelands Resource Centre	Eradication of Ship Rats from Truant Island NT.	\$282,493
QLD	Southern Gulf Catchments Ltd	Biodiversity Enhancement – WONS targeted across Northwest Queensland	\$1,020,000
QLD	South Cape York Catchments Inc.	Community Solutions for Managing Natural Resource Challenges in South Cape York	\$217,250
QLD	Northern Gulf Resource Management Group Limited	Community Capital: Enhancing biodiversity and land management practices in the Northern Gulf region through investing in community engagement, skills and knowledge	\$136,610

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<b>State</b>	<b>Funding recipients</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Funding Approved</b>
QLD	The University of Queensland	Eradication of Pacific rats on Maer Island, Torres Strait	\$294,900
QLD	Greening Australia Queensland	Collaborative invasive species management across the (Shoalwater Bay / Corio Bay) Ramsar Wetland system	in conjunction with Fitzroy Basin Association
QLD	Burdekin Solutions Limited trading as NQ Dry Tropics (formerly Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM)	Protecting the Ramsar wetland of Bowling Green Bay	\$2,000,000
QLD	Fitzroy Basin Association Inc	Addressing Threats Posed by Invasive Plant and Animal species on Shoalwater/Corio Bay Ramsar Wetlands	\$600,000
SA	Coorong District Local Action Plan Committee	Implementation of the Coorong and Tatiara Local Action Plans 2009 to 2013	\$2,158,200
SA	Agrilink Agricultural Consultants Pty Ltd	Sustainable Management of Soil Health, Ground Cover and Biodiversity in a Changing Climate	\$368,160
SA	Middleback Alliance (Ecological Horizons Pty. Ltd.)	The Middleback Alliance: A landholder partnership achieving landscape scale restoration in remote South Australia	\$247,500
SA	Loxton to Bookpurnong Local Action Planning Committee Inc	Suppress the threats posed by invasive plant and animal species at a HCVAE site, Katarapko Wetland	\$66,450
TAS	Friends of Adventure Bay Inc	Dune erosion control, weed management and rehabilitative planting on the Adventure Bay Foreshore, Bruny Island.	\$20,400
TAS	The Understorey Network incorporated	KidsCare for Tasmanian Coasts	\$48,230
TAS	NRM South, Tasmania	Protecting the Environmental Values of the Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon - a RAMSAR Wetland and Coastal hotspot	\$196,350
TAS	Wildcare Incorporated	Weed management, erosion control, and revegetation on Deal Island	\$30,040
TAS	Tamar Region Natural Resource Management Strategy Reference Group Inc. (Tamar NRM)	Increase Coastal Community Engagement, Participation and On-Ground Action within the Tamar Estuary and Coastal Regions	\$41,850
TAS	Derwent Estuary Program – Department of Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts	Community engagement for the protection and expansion of Little Penguins in the Derwent	\$50,000
TAS	Derwent Estuary Program – Department of Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts	Water quality improvements and community engagement in the Derwent estuary	\$335,320
TAS	The Understorey Network	Linking Farm Management and Biodiversity	\$94,000
VIC	Mr Keith Wilson	Mt Martha foreshore and associated Balcombe estuary and creek biodiversity and habitat rehabilitation project	\$50,000
VIC	Mornington Peninsula Shire	Coastal Banksia regeneration and habitat improvement at Mills Beach, Mornington – Stage 2	\$42,000

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VIC	Norman Mckinlay	"The Skink Link" Drum Drum Alloc Creek. West Rosebud	\$25,700
VIC	Anderson Inlet Landcare Group	Protection and enhancement of Anderson Inlet catchment through coastal community engagement	\$49,000
VIC	Bellarine Catchment Network	Bellarine Ramsar wetlands and coastal hotspots biodiversity protection and enhancement through integrated coastal community engagement.	\$100,000
VIC	Department of Sustainability and Environment	Community Coastcare Victoria	\$1,761,500
VIC	Greening Australia (Victoria)	Moolapio: Coastal Protection	\$385,786
VIC	Buloke and Northern Grampians Landcare Network	Working on Woodlands and Waterways with Landcare and Community in Buloke and Northern Grampians	\$914,875
VIC	Frankston Beach Association Inc	A well-vegetated foredune as an effective barrier against wave attacks on South Frankston Foreshore	\$21,186
VIC	Greening Australia (Vic)	Limeburners Link – Saltmarsh Weed Control	\$141,497
VIC	Bass Coast Landcare Network	'Penguins to the Prom'	\$93,600
VIC	Apollo Bay Kennett River Public Reserves Committee of Management	Coastal Communities reducing the impact and spread of WONS and other environmental pest plants along the Angahook- Otway Coast	\$35,500
VIC	Whitecliffs to Camerons Bight Foreshore Reserve CoM	Indigenous Ecosystem Revegetation and Regeneration	\$40,500
VIC	Conservation Volunteers Australia (Victoria/ Geelong region)	Indigenous community connections and protection of Corangamite coastal country	\$50,000
VIC	Reef Watch Victoria	Marine monitoring/ community engagement in Victoria's sub-tidal marine environment.	\$42,577
WA	Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation	The eradication of exotic rodents from several WA islands with significant conservation values	\$890,000
WA	Lyndon Land Conservation District Committee	Improving land management practices within the Lake MacLeod catchment area.	\$100,000
WA	The Moore Catchment Council (Inc)	Productive Saltbush Pastures to Combat Wind Erosion in the Eastern Moore River Catchment	\$96,500
WA	Department of Environment and Conservation (Wheatbelt Region)	Reducing impacts of rabbits to regenerate threatened flora, communities and critical habitat – Western Australian wheatbelt.	\$993,000
WA	Director of National Parks (Parks Australia)	Protecting the Ramsar listed Pulu-Keeling National Park from the impacts of threatening invasive species.	\$165,000
WA	South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc.	Protection of Ramsar values of Lake Warden and Lake Gore on the South Coast of Western Australia	\$460,806
WA	Shire of Chapman Valley	Sustainable land management and environmental enhancement in the Shire of Chapman Valley	\$100,000

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State	Funding recipients	Project Title	Funding Approved
<b>Total Funding for Competitive Projects under Caring for our Country 2009-10</b>			<b>\$57,453,236</b>

**Table 2: Base-level funding from Caring for our Country for regional natural resource management organisations, by State**

State	Region	Funding Approved from July 2009	
Western Australia	Avon Catchment Council	\$10,813,136	over four years
	Northern Agricultural Catchments Council (NACC)	\$14,189,100	over four years
	Perth Region NRM	\$4,608,000	over two years
	Rangelands NRM Coordinating Group (RCG)	\$7,926,000	over two years
	South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc (SCNRM)	\$7,511,416	over two years
	South West Catchments Council (SWCC)	\$10,564,000	over two years
	<b>Total for WA</b>	<b>\$55,611,652</b>	
South Australia	Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR)	\$4,418,000	over two years
	Alinytjara Wilurara (AW)	\$1,751,000	over one year
	Eyre Peninsula (EP)	\$4,572,900	over four years
	Kangaroo Island (KI)	\$2,113,200	over two years
	Northern and Yorke (N&Y)	\$3,134,000	over two years
	South Australian Arid lands (SAAL)	\$3,910,500	over four years
	South Australian Murray-Darling Basin (SA MDB)	\$10,779,456	over four years
	South East (SE)	\$4,778,000	over two years
	<b>Total for SA</b>	<b>\$35,457,056</b>	
Northern Territory	Northern Territory	\$6,230,540	over two years
	<b>Total for Northern Territory</b>	<b>\$6,230,540</b>	
Tasmania	Cradle Coast NRM	\$4,423,200	over four years
	NRM North	\$4,756,000	over four years
	NRM South	\$4,423,200	over four years
	<b>Total for Tasmania</b>	<b>\$13,602,400</b>	
Victoria	Corangamite CMA	\$5,530,000	over two years
	East Gippsland CMA	\$2,222,500	
	Glenelg Hopkins	\$6,962,200	over four years
	Goulburn Broken CMA	\$2,020,000	over one year
	Mallee CMA	\$7,892,769	over four years
	North Central CMA	\$1,001,866	over one year
	North East CMA	\$6,196,000	over four years

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State	Region	Funding Approved from July 2009	
	Port Phillip Westernport CMA	\$925,000	over one year
	West Gippsland CMA	\$2,935,000	over two years
	Wimmera CMA	\$2,304,000	over one year
	<b>Total for Victoria</b>	<b>\$37,989,335</b>	

**Projects approved in 2009-10 under Reef Rescue**

**AgForce – \$583,675 over 3 years**

AgForce will promote and deliver key Reef Rescue messages to target audiences, increasing landholder awareness about the benefits of improved land management practices, and developing electronic education products and tools to increase landholder knowledge about implementing improved land management practices. Through producer working groups, AgForce will also support landholders to share information about practice uptake and whole of farm system changes that result in improved water quality outcomes. AgForce will represent the grazing and grains industries at Reef Alliance meetings to share information about industry progress towards improved land management practices across the Great Barrier Reef catchments.

**Burnett Mary Regional Group - \$4,590,166 over 3 years**

The ongoing delivery of Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants and Partnerships by the Burnett Mary Regional Partnership in the Burnett Mary region will build on the processes and effective partnerships developed in 2008-09. Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants will focus on a range of specific improved management practices (A & B class) for intensive and extensive agricultural land uses within the region's priority investment area. Expected outcomes include the engagement of 96 graziers, 126 cane farmers, 73 horticulturalists and 26 dairy farmers in undertaking risk assessments, property management plans and on-ground works to reduce nutrients, chemicals and sediments leaving agricultural lands.

**Canegrowers - \$1,146,000 over 3 years**

From 2009-2012, CaneGrowers will implement agreed action plans to roll out a reef-wide sugar land management practice framework (A,B,C,D) and commence using this framework to benchmark industry progress in the reef regions towards adoption of improved land management practices that lead to a water quality outcome for the Great Barrier Reef. CaneGrowers will attend and represent the cane growing community at Reef Rescue meetings to share information about progress towards improved land management practices in the sugar industry across the Great Barrier Reef catchments. The industry will coordinate the Great Barrier Reef-Wide Sugar program, including managing working groups, and required Australian Government and Queensland Government reporting inputs.

**Cape York Sustainable Futures - \$581,250 over 1 year**

The northern section of the Great Barrier Reef is regarded as a refuge for coral reefs into the future. The catchments of the eastern Cape, north of Daintree, discharging to the Great Barrier Reef are less well understood than more southern catchments. Investment will be directed towards building the natural resource management capacity of graziers and horticulturalists in the region. To identify priority areas for investment an integrated risk assessment of the catchments of the Cape that discharge to the Reef is required to guide further investment in foundation studies before any major on-ground intervention strategies are implemented. Cape York Sustainable Futures envisage a three stage process of scoping study, targeted data collection and analysis, and finally directed intervention activities.

**Cotton Australia - \$40,000 over 1 year**

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The Implementation and Coordination of Cotton BMP in high risk reef catchments program aims to engage and support at least 90% of growers in the Burdekin Dry Tropics and 75% of growers in the Fitzroy Basin to undertake on-farm risk assessment and develop and complete action plans to drive the adoption of better practices in those areas that pose the greatest risk to water quality in the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. The project will deliver a coordinated reef-wide approach to BMP adoption in the cotton industry and aims to facilitate a more coordinated strategy to best practice development and implementation across irrigated industries. It will also facilitate cotton BMP adoption information being incorporated into reef-wide reporting, to enable a more holistic state of play for agriculture.

**Fitzroy Basin Association - \$10,365,040 over 3 years**

The Fitzroy Basin Association will continue to contribute to the Australian Government's commitment to reduce the discharge of sediment from the Fitzroy region to help the Great Barrier Reef respond to the impacts of climate change. The Association will work with three main industry groups to implement a suite of strategies, including stewardship payments to increase and maintain groundcover in the grazing sector, to reduce sediments, nutrients, and pesticides leaving farms as a result of agricultural production. They will do this in close association with industry groups to deliver best management practice knowledge and skills to landholders, who are then supported by a range of incentives made available by Fitzroy Basin Association investing Reef Rescue funds. Investments will be monitored at program and resource condition level to demonstrate real and lasting results.

**Growcom - \$481,250 over 3 years**

From 2009-2012, Growcom will implement agreed action plans to roll out reef-wide horticulture land management practice framework (ABCD) and commence using this framework to benchmark industry progress in the reef regions towards adoption of improved land management practices that lead to a water quality outcome for the Great Barrier Reef. Growcom will:

- promote and deliver key Reef Rescue messages to target audiences
- increase landholder awareness about the benefits of improved land management practices
- develop education products to increase landholder knowledge about implementing improved land management practices; and,
- link with research providers on information needs for improved practice relating to water quality, as identified through on-ground activities under the Great Barrier Reef-Wide Reef Rescue Horticulture program.

**North Queensland Dry Tropics (Burdekin Region) - \$11,700,963 over 3 years**

The ongoing delivery of Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants and Partnerships by NQ Dry Tropics in the Burdekin NRM region will build on effective partnerships developed in 2008-2009. Through their project "To the Rescue – our reef, our solution: Delivering water quality improvement in the Burdekin NRM region", NQ Dry Tropics will implement a water quality grants program to achieve sustainable agricultural practices in the sugar, horticulture and beef industries of the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region, through an effective and targeted extension and financial incentives program.

Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants will focus on a range of specific improved management practices (A & B class) for intensive and extensive agricultural land uses in priority areas within the region.

**Queensland Dairy Organisation - \$159,498 over 3 years**

A key emphasis of the Dairy Reef Rescue program is to target high water quality risk areas. This process has a number of critical steps within a farm planning context to ensure the highest water quality risk is being addressed. These are:

- Collection, Collation & Analysis of existing information such as water quality improvement plans, to target areas of delivery in a catchment.
- Further analysis of the water quality risks on a sub-catchment basis will be conducted to identify the sub catchment with the highest water quality risk posed by the dairy industry.



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- The highest water quality risks, on farms with the priority sub catchment, will be identified through the risk-based assessment process and priority actions will be identified. There are added benefits of this one-on-one facilitated risk assessment process such as the adoption of better management practices which derive water quality improvement outcomes through capacity building of knowledge and identify improved practices which can be adopted to improve the water quality leaving a farm.
- A Priority Action Plan will be developed to address these priorities to ensure the highest water quality risk is being adopted through assistance.

**Queensland Farmers' Federation - \$450,000 over 3 years**

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) is responsible for coordinating high level industry participation in the Reef Partnership meetings and ensuring consistency across Great Barrier Reef catchments in the development of industry body plans and a consistent reporting platform for monitoring Reef Rescue outcomes. A key focus of the QFF proposal is the preparation of an annual GBR-wide report on implementation of a consistent and comparable ABCD framework by farmers adopting practice change and undertaking farm risk assessments.

The QFF will convene regular Reef Partnership meetings and participate in other Reef Rescue components, such as the research and development and monitoring and evaluation components. The QFF will implement a Reef Rescue communication plan and promote key Reef Rescue messages across the GBR regions via media engagement, fact sheets and newsletters.

**Reef Catchments (Mackay / Whitsunday) - \$11,700,963 over 3 years**

The ongoing delivery of Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants and Partnerships by Reef Catchments in Mackay Whitsunday Region will build on the efficient processes and effective partnerships developed in 2008/2009. Reef Rescue Water Quality Grants will focus on a range of specific improved management practices (A & B class) for intensive and extensive agricultural land uses including sugar cane, horticulture and grazing.

**Regional Groups' Collective - \$321,000 over 3 years**

The Regional Groups' Collective is specifically responsible for coordinating high level regional body participation in the Reef Rescue partnership meetings and ensuring consistency across Great Barrier Reef catchments in the development of regional body plans and a consistent reporting platform for reporting Reef Rescue outcomes.

The Group's proposed project will oversee the implementation and use of the standard outputs reporting categories developed through previous Reef Rescue monitoring and reporting coordination contracts. The first year 2009-2010 will focus on trialing and fine-tuning data aggregation regarding practice change. This will be used for modeling the impact of practice change on water quality outcomes. The second year 2010-2011 will see a gradual focus towards cross checking modeling results with real time monitoring. The third year 2011-2012 will include a review of the project process and context, and a significant communication effort to highlight the results.

**Terrain Natural Resource Management (Wet Tropics) - \$8,327,632 over 3 years**

Over the next three years, Terrain and its industry and community partners aim to secure reduced nutrient, pesticide and sediment loads to the Reef via measurable changes in the uptake of agricultural practices in Wet Tropics catchments. This proposal builds on the successes of the transition year and establishes the regional foundations to secure change. In the next three years, this proposal will: continue to accelerate practice change; refine risk-based investment priorities; and maintain capacities to benchmark continuous improvement in the sugar, horticultural, dairy and grazing industries.

**World Wildlife Fund - \$37,000 over 1 year**

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WWF will seek a role for local skilled conservation representatives on regional working group panels or devolved grant committees as is the case already with the Terrain Natural Resource Management body and Mackay Whitsunday Natural Resource Management body. Opportunities will vary between regions, but WWF will endeavour to seek an opportunity with each of the original NRM groups and their partners to involve a local conservation representative in Reef Rescue deliberations. WWF will ensure that representatives are fully aware of all program issues and critical conservation outcomes aligned with rural practice change.

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<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	National Heritage Trust – Auditor- General arrangements - process arrangements		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	12 (28/5/09)		

**Senator IAN MACDONALD asked:**

**Ms Kruk**—Senator Macdonald, I think we are all conscious of the fact that the Auditor-General was very critical about a whole range of the funding arrangements surrounding the NHT. I think we recognise that there will be process improvements as we go along.

...

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Can you just remind and give me, perhaps on notice, the reference to the Auditor-General's concern about the previous arrangements? I am not aware of those.

**Ms Kruk**—Yes, sure. We will do that.

**Answer:**

The Auditor-General completed an evaluation of regional funding arrangements under the Natural Heritage Trust in February 2008. Refer to the Auditor-General's Audit Report Number 21, 2007–08, entitled *Regional Delivery Model for the Natural Heritage Trust and the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality*.

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	4
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Caring for our Country – advisory panels		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	12 (28 May 2009)		

**Senator MACDONALD asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—If you cannot tell us their names, which is just absolutely ridiculous, can you at least tell us where they live?

**Ms Rankin**—I do not have that information with me, Senator.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Do it on notice...

**Ms Rankin**—In two weeks time we will be able to provide you the full details of all the panel members, because the assessment process will have been completed and recommendations will go to ministers.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—In advising us of the panel members, unless they are obvious, can you also advise us the expertise for which they were put on the panel.

**Answer/s:**

The information provided in tables 1 to 4 below details the areas of expertise and states of residence of the Caring for our Country Scientific and Community Advisory panels.

**Table 1: Scientific Advisory Panel Members**

Member	Areas of Expertise	State
Dr Neil McKenzie (Chair)	Coastal and aquatics, Sustainable farm practices, Northern and remote natural resource management	ACT
Professor Bruce Auld	Biodiversity, Sustainable farm practices	NSW
Dr Guy Fitzhardinge	Coastal and aquatics, Sustainable farm practices, Community engagement, Northern and remote natural resource management	NSW
Professor Ted Lefroy	Biodiversity, Sustainable farm practices	TAS
Professor Zada Lipman	Biodiversity, Coastal and aquatics	NSW
Dr John Merrick	Coastal and aquatics, Community engagement,	NSW
Professor David Pannell	Sustainable farm practices, Community engagement, Northern and remote natural resource management	WA

The chairs and deputy chairs of the three Community Advisory panels detailed below formed the National Community Advisory Panel.

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**Table 2: NSW/Victoria Community Advisory Panel Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Areas of Expertise</b>	<b>State</b>
Ms Alison Russell-French (Chair)	Biodiversity, Sustainable farming, Coastal and aquatic, Community engagement	NSW
Ms Jenny O'Sullivan (Deputy Chair)	Sustainable farming, Community engagement	VIC
Mr Matthew Fox	Biodiversity, Coastal and aquatic, Community engagement	VIC
Ms Barbara Armitage OAM	Coastal and aquatic, Community engagement	NSW
Mr John Klem	Biodiversity, Sustainable farming, Community engagement	NSW
Ms Coral Love	Sustainable farming, Community engagement	NSW
Mr Collon Mullett	Biodiversity, Community engagement (Indigenous expertise)	VIC
Mr Jack Speirs	Sustainable farming Community engagement	VIC
Mr Wade Whitelaw	Biodiversity, Sustainable farming Practices, Community engagement (Indigenous expertise)	NSW

**Table 3: Tasmania/Western Australia/South Australia Community Advisory Panel  
Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Areas of Expertise</b>	<b>State</b>
Mr Ian Sauer (Chair)	Sustainable farming, Natural resource management	TAS
Ms Sharon Starick (Deputy Chair)	Biodiversity, Sustainable farming, Coastal and aquatic, Northern and remote natural resource management (NRM)	SA
Mr Peter Sims OAM	Biodiversity, Coastal and Aquatic environments, Community engagement	TAS
Mr Wolford Parsons	Sustainable farming, Community engagement	SA
Ms Anna Barbara Wind	Community engagement, Natural resource management	TAS
Mr Rex Edmondson AO	Sustainable farming, Community engagement	WA

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**Table 4: Queensland/Northern Territory Community Advisory Panel Members**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Areas of Expertise</b>	<b>State</b>
Ms Olwyn Crimp (Chair)	Biodiversity, Coastal and aquatic, Northern and remote NRM, Community engagement	QLD
Mr Anderson Lauder (Deputy Chair)	Coastal and aquatic, Northern and remote NRM, Community engagement	NT
Mr John Christophersen	Biodiversity, Coastal and aquatic, Community engagement, Indigenous matters, Sustainable farming, Northern and remote NRM	NT
Dr Gabriel Crowley	Biodiversity, Community engagement, Northern and remote NRM	NT
Mr James Forwood AM	Community engagement, Sustainable farming, Northern and remote NRM	QLD
Mr Peter Alden	Sustainable farming, Biodiversity, Community engagement	QLD

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts  
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Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	5
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Funding for Natural Resource Management groups – announcement of funding		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	13 (28/5/09)		

**Senator IAN MACDONALD asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Perhaps I should have started there. Do you agree with your colleagues in Agriculture that there is to be shortly an advice, whether it is an announcement or a letter, advising of transitional arrangements from the end of June to when the money starts to flow?

**Ms Kruk**—Yes, that is the case. When Minister Burke and Minister Garrett met with the regional chairs at last week's ministerial council meeting, both ministers provided that assurance directly to the chairs.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—That they would tell them?

**Ms Kruk**—Yes.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—I am not asking what they are going to tell them.

**Ms Kruk**—We also indicated we cannot give you the exact date that he will tell them. That commitment was made, Senator Macdonald. If that is what you are asking, that commitment was made.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Is it in the next couple of days? Is it in the next week?

**Ms Kruk**—Minister, I would not be in a position to predict what day the announcement would be made; you would understand that.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Perhaps Senator Arbib can take that on notice.

**Ms Kruk**—We will, thank you.

**Answer:**

Letters from Ministers Garrett and Burke announcing 2009–10 funding arrangements for the regional NRM organisations were sent to NRM Regional Chairs and Chief Executive Officers on 16 June 2009.

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Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	6
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Funding for Natural Resource Management groups-employment		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	13 (28/5/09)		

**Senator IAN MACDONALD asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Do you have numbers of people employed by NRM groups?

...

**Mr Forbes**—These are not verified figures; they have just been provided by state and regional organisations. As at October last year, the figure of full-time equivalents of direct employment is 1,785.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Is that broken up in any way between capital cities and regional areas?

**Mr Forbes**—I do not have that split in front of me.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—You do not have it?

**Mr Forbes**—We could take it on notice, if you prefer.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—All right, if you would. There are several groups in Queensland where five or six people are employed in a town of 200 people and it is a very important part of the economy, let alone all the good work they do in natural resource management.

**Answer:**

The Australian Government does not have access to information that would allow us to present employment figures for regional Natural Resource Management organisations broken down by capital city and regional areas. The attached table shows employment figures for regions that include capital cities and for regions that do not include a capital city.

At 20 October 2008 there were 184.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions employed by regional Natural Resource Management organisations whose boundaries encompass capital cities. This equates to 10.35% of all FTE positions employed by regions (see Table 1).



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**Table 1: Employment in capital cities and regional areas in October 2008**

<b>Regions including capital cities and other regions</b>	Regional Employment as at 20 Oct 2008 (per FTE)
<b>New South Wales</b>	
Sydney Metro (includes Sydney)	23.0
Other regional areas	587.0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>610.0</b>
<b>Queensland</b>	
South East Queensland (includes Brisbane)	36.1
Other regional areas	252.7
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>288.8</b>
<b>South Australia</b>	
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges (includes Adelaide)	71.2
Other regional areas	212.7
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>283.9</b>
<b>Tasmania</b>	
South (includes Hobart)	12.5
Other regional areas	27.0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>39.5</b>
<b>Victoria</b>	
Port Philip and Westernport (includes Melbourne)	20.2
Other regional areas	424.80
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>445.0</b>
<b>Western Australia</b>	
Swan (includes Perth)	14.0
Other regional areas	96.0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>110.0</b>
<b>Northern Territory</b>	
Northern Territory (includes Darwin)	1.0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>	
ACT (includes Canberra)	6.8
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>6.8</b>
<b>FTE in NRM regions that include capital cities</b>	<b>184.8</b>
<b>FTE in all other NRM regional areas</b>	<b>1600.2</b>
<b>Total Australia Wide</b>	<b>1,785.0</b>

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**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	7
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Lands and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Carpentaria Ghost Nets Program		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	15 (28/5/09)		

**Senator IAN MACDONALD asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—I thought that program got direct funding, but is it managed by Northern Gulf, is it? How does it work? I am not just being parochial about this program; it is a world- recognised program involving a lot of Indigenous people.

**Ms Rankin**—I would have to confirm with you who the actual contract is with for the Carpentaria Ghost Nets Program.

**Answers:**

The Northern Gulf Resource Management Group is contracted to administer funds and provide project management support for the Carpentaria Ghost Nets Program.

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**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	8
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Parks Australia Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	National Reserve System – Indigenous Protected Areas		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	17 (28/5/09)		

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

**Senator BIRMINGHAM**—Perhaps if you could come back to me by way of answers to questions on notice with a bit more detail about what the minimum standards are for an area to be an Indigenous protected area.

**Ms Kruk**—Sure. If we can pull together a pack of information for you also showing where the Indigenous protected areas are, we will. They are an incredibly significant potential contribution to the National Reserve System, and I think there is quite a bit of information we can provide you directly and also to the committee.

**Senator BIRMINGHAM**—Thank you Ms Kruk.

**Answers:**

An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of Indigenous-owned land or sea where traditional Indigenous owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation.

The Indigenous Protected Areas element of the Caring for our Country initiative supports Indigenous communities to manage their land as IPAs, contributing to the National Reserve System (information on the National Reserve System can be accessed at [www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/index.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/index.html)).

There are a number of stages involved in developing and managing an IPA. Communities first apply to the Government for help to start investigating whether an IPA is the right future for their land.

Proposals for funding to support the establishment of Indigenous Protected Areas are assessed against the guidelines for the establishment of the National Reserve System (NRS) and the following criteria:

- The proposed project is located in an Australian Biogeographical Region allocated Very High, High or Medium priority ranking - which contains few protected areas; or the proposal includes land with significant natural and cultural heritage values (more information on Australian Biogeographical Regions can be accessed at [www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/science/ibra.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/nrs/science/ibra.html)).

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- The proponent organisation has a strong interest in managing its land for conservation purposes.
- The proponent organisation has the capacity to carry out the project and to administer funds in accordance with Australian Government funding requirements.
- The proposal has clear support from the relevant State/Territory nature conservation agency.
- Support from other sources is available to assist management of the proposed project.

The IPA program can provide support for Indigenous groups to consult with their community and with other stakeholders on the implications of declaring an IPA on their land. Indigenous landowners may need to access legal advice or advice on cultural heritage and conservation aspects of their proposed IPA before they take the decision to declare an IPA on their land.

Before an Indigenous Protected Area is established the Indigenous landowners are required to develop an IPA Plan of Management that details the management actions that will be carried out protect the values of the area. Developing the management plan may involve:

- talking to relevant State/Territory conservation agencies and other agencies that may be able to support the project
- getting expert advice on the values of the IPA and how these should be managed and protected
- visiting existing IPAs to talk to the Indigenous landowners there about their experience with developing an IPA.

IPA management plans identify:

- the activities the community plans to undertake to manage the land and its cultural values
- the decision-making structures that will govern how they make management decisions
- the World Conservation Union category that will guide the way the IPA is managed. More information on the World Conservation Union can be accessed at [www.environment.gov.au/parks/iucn.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/iucn.html).

When communities are ready, they make a formal and public announcement of their intention to manage their land as an IPA in accordance with the management plan.

Once an IPA has been declared, it is actively managed in line with the plan of management. The management activities depend on the needs of the IPA, but usually include work to control weeds, feral animals and wildfire, work to conserve cultural and natural heritage, and setting up infrastructure to manage visitor access.

Detailed information on the process for establishing IPAs and details on the locations and attributes of the declared IPAs can be accessed at

<http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa/index.html>

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	9
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	National Weeds Significance - funding		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	18 (28/5/09)		

**Senator IAN MACDONALD asked:**

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Which was the committee Mr Cotter used to manage? It was a weeds advisory committee. He is the head of AgForce in Queensland.

**Mr Forbes**—Senator, I cannot answer that. I will have to take that on notice.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Could you, because we did not get to this; we talked about weeds in agriculture but we did not get to this. Perhaps, through your involvement, I could get details of what the funding is for the Weeds of National Significance, who runs it, what advisory groups there are and how the decisions are made. We were told in Agriculture estimates about the cutback in funding to weeds research and Defeating the Weed Menace program, which has now terminated and been replaced by something with less money. Again, is that something your department is involved in or is it solely Agriculture?

**Mr Forbes**—It is primarily Agriculture, Senator, but our department has a strong interest because weeds cross boundaries and they are actually also on public lands.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Certainly, it costs Australia over \$4 billion annually and that is just in economic terms, without even contemplating the horrific damage to the ecology and the general environment. If you take those on notice, that would be helpful, thank you.

**Answers:**

Mr Cotter chaired the National Weeds Advisory Group from June 2005 until it ceased on 30 June 2008. The role of the group was to advise ministers on the management and direction of the Defeating the Weed Menace program.

The Weeds of National Significance program (WoNS) is a multi-jurisdictional program endorsed by Ministerial Councils to address priority weed species for nationally coordinated action. The Australian Weeds Committee (a sub-group of the National Biosecurity Committee) oversees implementation of the WoNS program and reports to the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council. Committee membership consists of representatives from the Australian and state and territory governments. The committee is chaired by a National Biosecurity Committee representative.

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The WoNS program is funded on an Australian Government/state and territory government cost sharing basis and 13 WoNS coordinators and one national facilitator are employed under this arrangement. States and territories provide in-kind support by providing infrastructure for the coordinators and covering the cost of participation of their own officers. The Australian Government provides for the cost of dedicated coordinators. This includes remuneration, communication publications and contributions to the involvement of non-government members on the management groups. In 2008–09, the Australian Government spent \$1.350 million on the program and recently committed \$1.685 million for 2009–10.

The Australian Government has committed \$15.3 million over four years from 2008–09 to 2011–12 to establish a National Weeds and Productivity Research Program. The aim of this program is to improve farm and forestry productivity by increasing applied research on weeds and improving extension with the farm and forestry sector. The program is administered by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Under the Defeating the Weed Menace program, \$5.4 million over four years (from 2004–05 to 2007–08) was committed to research and development.

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**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	10
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Australian Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment 2008		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator SIEWERT asked:**

1. The Australian Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment 2008 report has reportedly been submitted to the government, is this correct?
2. If so, why hasn't it been released?
3. When will it be released?

**Answer:**

In mid-November 2008, the Australian Government Land and Coasts team assumed responsibility from Land and Water Australia for finalising the draft Biodiversity Assessment 2008 report.

The draft report has been compiled and drafted under the direction of a joint working group of Commonwealth and State and Territory government officials; initially set up under the National Land and Water Resources Audit. The draft report was provided to this group for comment and was sent out to four experts for peer review.

Following receipt of peer review and state and territory government comments, the State and Territory Working Group asked that a consultant be engaged to revise the document to address the comments. The revised version will be sent to the Working Group in July for approval.

The Australian Government expects that the report will be released this calendar year.

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**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1.	<b>Question No:</b>	11
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Caring for Country – funding		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

1. Given last year's budget papers projected that funding for Caring for our Country would be \$440.1 million in 2009–10, is there \$440.1 million for Caring for our Country allocated for 2009–10 in this year's Budget? If not, why not?
2. Where is this figure in this year's budget papers?
3. How does this compare to funding allocated for 2008–09? Is it more or less?
4. Please provide a breakdown of how this money will be divided between the Natural Heritage Trust, the National Landcare Program, the Environmental Stewardship Program and the Working On Country Program?

**Answers**

1. The total funding available for Caring for our Country in 2009–10 is \$407.927 million, with components appropriated through the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA); Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and the Department of the Treasury. The difference of \$32.338 million from the \$440.265 million previously published in Portfolio Budget Statements for DEWHA and DAFF will now be spent directly by the department as:
  - \$12.4 million for Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts administration costs for the implementation of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
  - \$12.9 million for Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts administration costs for core departmental activities;
  - \$7.1 million for Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry administration costs for core departmental activities; and
  - an increase of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Landcare appropriation by \$0.068 million due to a pricing indexation of the administered budget.

Under the previous arrangements, these funds were provided from Caring for our Country to the departments via transfers (under Regulation 15 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*). These funds are now appropriated directly to the above areas for the purposes as previously.



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2. The total funding appropriated for Caring for our Country in 2009–10 of \$407.927 million is shown in this years Budget statements as follows:
- \$138 million for guaranteed regional funding is shown in Table 1.3 on page 32 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009–10 Budget Paper No. 1.6 for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Portfolio.
  - \$232.055 million of Annual Administered Expenses and \$2.753 million within Program Support Expenses is appropriated for Caring for our Country and is shown in the table at the top of page 38 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009–10 Budget Paper No. 1.6 for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Portfolio.
  - \$32.070 million of Annual Administered Expenses and \$3.049 million within Program Support Expenses is appropriated for the Landcare element of Caring for our Country and is shown in the table on page 36 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009–10 Budget Paper No. 1.1 for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Portfolio.

Following the Budget, the Department discovered an inadvertent double counting error in tables on pages 35 and 38 of the Portfolio Budget Statements. For the record, the corrected tables have been provided at Attachment A.

3. A total of \$407.729 million has been appropriated for Caring for our Country in 2009–10. It is less than the appropriation for 2008–09, as outlined in the answer to QoN 11.1 above.

4.

<b>Caring for our Country Appropriations</b>	<b>2008-09</b> (\$ million)	<b>2009-10</b> (\$ million)
Natural Heritage Trust	385.000	216.600
Treasury appropriation under FFR Act - Regional	0.000	138.000
Landcare - Administered	31.233	32.070
Landcare - Departmental	2.986	3.049
Environmental Stewardship - Administered	5.328	9.755
Environmental Stewardship - Departmental	2.139	2.753
Working on Country	1.600	5.700
<b>Total Caring for our Country Budget</b>	<b>428.286</b>	<b>407.927</b>

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**Attachment A**

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Table 2.1.1 Budgeted Expenses and Resources for Outcome 1		
Outcome 1: The conservation and Protection of Australia's terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems through supporting research, developing information, supporting natural resource management, regulating matters of national environmental significance	2008-09 Estimated actual expenses	2009-10 Estimated expenses
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Program 1.1: Sustainable Management of Natural resources and the Environment</b>		
<b>Administered expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)		
Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment	-	247,334
Community Water Grants	11,197	-
Caring for our Country - Environmental Stewardship Program	5,328	-
Caring for our Country - Natural Heritage Trust	226,000	-
Less Special Accounts	(226,000)	(216,600)
Caring for our Country - Working on Country	1,600	-
Working on Country	6,211	-
A sustainable future for Tasmania - Mole Creek	150	-
A sustainable future for Tasmania - Tourism Program	289	-
Other	5,902	-
Other Services (Appropriation Bill No. 2)		
Caring for our Country	159,000	-
Less Special Accounts	(159,000)	-
Special Accounts		
Natural Heritage Trust	385,000	216,600
<b>Departmental expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	11,189	44,967
Revenues from independent sources (section 31)	28,523	30,914
<b>Total for Program 1.1</b>	<b>455,389</b>	<b>323,215</b>
<b>Program 1.2: Environmental Regulation, Information and Research</b>		
<b>Administered expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)		
Environmental Regulation, Information and Research	-	28,074
Australian Biological Resources Study (ABRS)	1,992	-
Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities (CERF)	25,395	-
<b>Departmental expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	126,624	126,858
Revenues from independent sources (section 31)	34,481	20,275
<b>Total for Program 1.2</b>	<b>188,492</b>	<b>175,207</b>
<b>Outcome 1 totals by appropriation type:</b>		
<b>Administered expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	56,064	58,808
Other Services (Appropriation Bill No. 2)	-	-
Special Accounts	385,000	216,600
<b>Departmental expenses</b>		
Ordinary Annual Services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	137,814	171,825
Revenues from independent sources (section 31)	63,004	51,169
Special Appropriations	-	-
<b>Total expenses for Outcome 1</b>	<b>643,882</b>	<b>496,422</b>
	2008-09	2009-10
<b>Average staffing level (number)</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,171</b>

(B1) - Annual Appropriation Bill 1 (Ordinary Annual Services)  
(B2) - Annual Appropriation Bill 2 (Other Services)  
NB: Comparative figures for 2008-2009 are presented under the new Outcome Structure for the Department.  
NB: The Other Trust Monies and Services for Other Governments Special Accounts are not reported in Table 2.1.1 Resources for Outcome 1 as the Department has no discretion over the receipts returned to these accounts.

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Program expenses 1.1 Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment					
(000)	2008-09 Revised budget	2009-10 Budget	2010-11 Forward year 1	2011-12 Forward year 2	2012-13 Forward year 3
<b>Annual Administered Expenses:</b>					
<b>Administered Item:</b>					
Caring for our country <sup>1</sup>	391,528	232,055	254,787	242,219	247,219
Less Special Accounts	(385,000)	(216,600)	(227,600)	(229,600)	(234,600)
Single Indigenous Budget Submission	5,211	10,610	3,879	3,941	4,020
Other	11,654	4,969	-	-	-
<b>Special Account Expenses:</b>					
Natural Heritage Trust of Australia Account	385,000	216,600	227,600	229,600	234,600
<b>Program Support Expenses:</b>					
Departmental Program Support <sup>2</sup>	39,712	75,881	67,511	63,596	78,701
<b>Expenses not requiring Appropriation in the Budget Year:</b>					
Scout Hall Water Saving Infrastructure	5,854	-	-	-	-
<b>Total program expenses</b>	<b>455,389</b>	<b>323,215</b>	<b>326,177</b>	<b>309,756</b>	<b>330,940</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes appropriation from Natural Heritage Trust, Environmental Stewardship (2011-12 and beyond budget currently included in the Contingency Reserve) and Working on Country (part of Single Indigenous Budget Submission)

Payments transferred to Treasury (138,000pa) and Core & EPBC funding transferred to DEWHA & DAFF(32,400 pa) from 2009-10

<sup>2</sup> Includes Other Revenue in addition to Appropriation and Sale of Goods and Services.

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**Outcome:** 1. **Question No:** 12  
**Program:** 1.1  
**Division/Agency:** Australian Government Land and  
Coasts Division  
**Topic:** Caring for Country – Budget  
Statements  
**Hansard Page ECA:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

Budget Portfolio Statements (Budget Related Paper No 1.6.) has a table on page 38 that lists the administered expenses for Caring for Our Country in 2009–10 as \$232 million.

1. Is the \$232 million identified on page 38 of the Portfolio Budget Statement as the Caring for our Country administered expenditure the total amount of funding that will be available under Caring for our Country this year? If not, to what does this figure refer?

**Answer:**

The total funding appropriated for Caring for our Country in 2009–10 is \$407.927 million. The details about the three components of the Caring for our Country appropriation through the Department for the Environment, Water, Heritage, the Arts, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of the Treasury, are provided in the answer to Question on Notice 11.

The \$232.055 million identified on page 38 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009-10 Budget Paper No. 1.6 for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Portfolio comprises the following components of the Caring for our Country appropriation that are available for administered expenses.

<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>2009-10</b> (\$ million)
Natural Heritage Trust	216.600
Environmental Stewardship - Administered	9.755
Working on Country	5.700
<b>Total</b>	<b>232.055</b>

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<b>Outcome:</b>	1.	<b>Question No:</b>	13
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Caring for Country – Budget Statements		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

Page 37 of Budget Portfolio Statement states “The reduction in funding primarily relates to the transfer of payments to the states and territories...”

1. Can you please clearly define, in dollars, the reduction in funding?
2. How will this reduction affect grass roots natural resource management groups relying on this funding?

**Answer:**

\$407.927 million has been appropriated for Caring for our Country in 2009-10.

The information on page 37 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009–10 Budget Paper No. 1.6 for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Portfolio, primarily refers to Caring for our Country guaranteed baseline regional funding of \$138 million which was formerly appropriated to the Department for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and will now be appropriated to the Department of the Treasury under the Federal Financial Relations Framework for expenditure for this same purpose.

This transfer is shown in Table 1.3 on page 32 of the Portfolio Budget Statements 2009–10 Budget Paper No. 1.6 for the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Portfolio.

The funds appropriated to Caring for our Country were also reduced by \$32.338 million to finally rationalise long standing commitments from the Natural Heritage Trust to core activities of the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, and for the implementation of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. These funds do not directly support natural resource management groups. The other budget transfers however will have no effect on grass roots natural resource management groups as the \$138 million transferred to the Treasury is for payments to regional groups.

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts  
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

**Outcome:** 1 **Question No:** 14  
**Program:** 1.1  
**Division/Agency:** Australian Government Land and  
Coasts Division  
**Topic:** Caring for Country – Regional bodies  
**Hansard Page ECA:** Written Question on Notice

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

“Under Caring for Our Country, regional bodies will continue to receive guaranteed funding of at least 60 per cent of historical average funding to secure their operations. This funding, \$138 million in 2009–10, will be paid through the States.”

1. What amount, in dollars, is 60 per cent of historical average funding received by regional bodies under Caring for our Country, as per Budget Paper 3?
2. What percentage of historical average funding is \$138 million?
3. Please provide final state allocations of the \$138 million funding distribution or indicate when these amounts will be finalised?

**Answers:**

1. \$127.2 million is 60 per cent of the historical average annual funding to regions.
2. \$138 million is 65.1% of the historical average annual funding to regions.
3. Regional bodies were advised of their ongoing guaranteed annual allocations on 13 February 2009.

<b>Region by Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Ongoing Annual Allocation (\$ million)</b>
New South Wales	35.251
Victoria	27.520
Queensland	23.020
South Australia	17.346
Western Australia	24.103
Tasmania	5.714
Northern Territory	3.687
Australian Capital Territory	1.359
<b>Total</b>	<b>138.000</b>

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts  
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	15
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coasts Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Caring for Country – Business Plan		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

1. When will successful projects under the 2009–10 Caring for Our Country Business Plan be announced?
2. When will the 2010–11 Caring for Our Country Business Plan be released?
3. When will funding rounds be opening?
4. What will be the eligibility requirements for this funding?
5. Will there be any changes to the programme guidelines and/or targets?
6. Will there be any scope for local natural resource management groups to determine their own priorities and targets?

**Answers:**

1. Successful projects under the 2009–10 Caring for our Country business plan have been announced in July 2009.
2. It is intended that the 2010–11 Caring for our Country business plan will be released in September 2009.
3. Funding rounds will open upon release of the 2010–11 Caring for our Country business plan.
4. Eligibility requirements for this funding are still being finalised.
5. Yes there will be changes to the program guidelines and targets. The Australian Government is currently seeking public feedback on the 2009–10 application form, business plan and targets as part of the review and improvement process.
6. Local natural resource management groups are able to determine their own priorities and targets. To be successful in obtaining Caring for our Country funding they must address investment priorities outlined in the Caring for our Country business plan.

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and The Arts  
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice

**Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts portfolio**

Budget Estimates, May 2009

<b>Outcome:</b>	1	<b>Question No:</b>	16
<b>Program:</b>	1.1		
<b>Division/Agency:</b>	Australian Government Land and Coast Division		
<b>Topic:</b>	Community Water Grants		
<b>Hansard Page ECA:</b>	Written Question on Notice		

**Senator BIRMINGHAM asked:**

What was the budgeted expenditure for Community Water Grants for 2008–09? How much has actually been spent?

**Answer:**

The budgeted expenditure for Community Water Grants for 2008–09 was \$11.197 million. During 2008–09, \$10.338 million of this was expended, with the remainder committed to projects and scheduled to be spent during 2009–10.