

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: AIMS
Output Group: AIMS

DEST Question No. E765_07

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Research funding

1. Do you also agree with Dr Poiner when he argues that it will be difficult to meet such responsibilities "without further investment in marine science?"
2. What has AIMS done about it?
3. Has AIMS Council alerted the government to this problem and sought assistance to address it? With what result?
4. Has either AIMS or its Council addressed the problems arising from this governments focus on profit-driven research at the expense of the basic research necessary to address fundamental environmental and social problems?
5. Do you see a contradiction between the decade long neglect of AIMS base funding and the recent announcement of \$55 million to profit driven research to increase seafood demand?
6. Would you not agree that that sort of research has to be predicated on proper and adequate funding for the basic research that AIMS undertakes?
7. How do you see this contradiction being resolved?

Answer:

AIMS has provided the following response:

Research Funding

1. Marine science is provided nationally through a range of research providers, reflecting the diverse nature of Australia's marine environment. Apart from AIMS, key Australian Government agencies include CSIRO, Geoscience Australia and the Australian Government Antarctic Division.
2. For its part, AIMS has sought to maximise research funding through operational efficiencies and pursuing co-investment opportunities with industry and other stakeholders. AIMS has provided strong leadership in the development of major multi-agency research programmes such as the Marine and Tropical Science Research Facility (MTSRF), the Western Australian Marine Science Institution and the development of the Integrated Ocean Observing System which was recently funded under the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure System. AIMS has also developed joint ventures to progress marine science and technology, including AIMS@JCU and the Arafura-Timor Sea Research Facility.

3. Yes, increase in funding for AIMS to \$110.6 million over the four years from 2007-08 to 2010-11 represented a positive outcome.
4. In relation to marine science, support previously available via funding provided to the Reef CRC is now provided by the Commonwealth Environment Research Facility (CERF) programme. AIMS was a participant in the Reef CRC and is also involved in MTRSF established under CERF.
5. Australia's marine resources can contribute significant national environmental, social and economic benefits. Marine industries (including offshore oil and gas, tourism and fisheries) contribute to both domestic and export markets. There is a global increase in demand for seafood and investment in both strategic and applied marine science is necessary.
6. See 5 above.
7. See 5 above.