

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1 (ARC)

Output Group: 1 (ARC)

DEST Question No. E337_04

Senator Carr asked on 5 November 2003:

Question:

There has been growing international concern at the effects of the global lack of knowledge about biodiversity and environmental destabilisation and particularly by a chronic shortage of expertise in taxonomy and systematics.

- (a) In the light of its international importance, why was there no funding for systematics research in this year's ARC Discovery Grants?
- (b) Can you confirm that biodiversity was a government priority area for funding this year?
- (c) Does that not make the lack of support for this area even more inexplicable?
- (d) Can you provide this Committee with a table showing the number and value of ARC Discovery grants addressing systematics research over the past four years, on a year-by-year basis?

Answer:

ARC funding for research in taxonomy and systematics

The ARC has provided the following response.

- (a) In 2004, the ARC will provide funding of \$1,361,574 for 20 *Discovery-Projects* grants (both new and continuing research projects). The 20 grants include five for which funding will commence in 2004.
- (b) There are four National Research Priorities of which one is entitled *An Environmentally Sustainable Australia*. One of the goals in this priority area relates to the understanding and sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity.
- (c) The ARC will continue to support high-quality research projects through *Discovery-Projects* and other schemes that encompass taxonomy and systematics study.
- (d) The following table of data is provided.

ARC Support for taxonomy/systematics under the Large Grants/Discovery–Projects program—new and continuing projects—2000 to 2004

Funding year		Large Grants / Discovery–Projects
2000	No. of projects funded	8
	Funding allocated	\$359,900
2001	No. of projects funded	16
	Funding allocated	\$768,977
2002	No. of projects funded	24
	Funding allocated	\$1,211,708
2003	No. of projects funded	23
	Funding allocated	\$1,413,519
2004	No. of projects funded	20
	Funding allocated	\$1,361,574