

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Budget Estimates May 2007

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 01

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Expansion of response to question 3112?

**Hansard Page:** 33 (24/5/07)

**Senator Allison asked:**

**Senator ALLISON**—Could you refer the appropriate department to my question No. 3112? I am seeking an expansion on that.

**Answer:**

Further information regarding carbon in soil has been provided in response to LWA 08. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry provided Senator Allison with a full verbal briefing on 17 September 2007.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 02

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Communiqué from Ministerial meeting – paper on Salinity in Australia

**Hansard page:** 35 (24/04/07)

**Senator Siewert asked:**

**Senator SIEWERT**—Is it possible to get a copy of those principles? Is that publicly available?

**Mr Aldred**—Yes, we can provide those.

**Answer:**

The principles that Senator Siewert referred to were tabled at the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council meeting in Brisbane on the 20 April 2007.

A copy of the principles are **attached**.

**[NRM02 attachment]**

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 03

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Amount of expenditure for weeds

**Hansard page:** 40 (24/04/07)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—What was the amount of expenditure in 2004-05?

**Mr Aldred**—I will check to see whether Mr Shaw has that figure.

**Mr Shaw**—I am sorry, I do not have that with me. Can we take that question on notice?

**Answer:**

Defeating the Weed Menace programme expenditure 2004/05

	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
<b>DEW NHT</b>	\$1.8m	\$1.799m
<b>DAFF NHT</b>	\$2.2m	\$2.23m
<b>Appropriation Bill 1</b>	\$1.69m	\$1.655m

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 04

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Natural Heritage Trust/National Action Plan expenditure

**Hansard page:** 41 (24/04/07)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Is the estimated actual in the PBS considered now to be fully committed?

**Mr Aldred**—We expect it to be fully expended by the end of the financial year.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Is it committed now?

**Mr Aldred**—I think we have got investment plans that would see most of it committed. I would have to take on notice exactly what we have got committed in 2006-07. At the moment, we have got a further \$39.8 million in commitments that are to roll out, but I have not got the split between the last month of this financial year and next financial year with me.

**Answer:**

The 2006/2007 financial year was fully committed and expended. The 2007/2008 financial year has commitment of \$49.1 million as at the 30 June 2007.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 05

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** National Landcare Programme

**Hansard page:** 42 (24/05/07)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—So how much was transferred? Is that the difference between \$7.9 million and \$11.7 million?

**Mr Aldred**—I suspect it is. I must admit I have not got my 2006-07 PBS with me so I will have to take it on notice. I can provide the shifts in funding there. From recollection, it may actually be on the Hansard. I may have advised the committee of those changes previously, but I will check.

**Answer:**

In the 2006 Federal Budget, \$300,000 from the National Landcare Programme (NLP) National Component was re-profiled from 2005-06 to 2006-07, leaving the 2005-06 NLP National Component appropriation at \$7.922 million.

At the same time, \$1.2 million was re-profiled from 2007-08 to 2006-07. The combined transfers of \$1.5 million brought the 2006-07 NLP National Component appropriation to \$11.722 million.

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**Question no:** NRM 06

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** National Landcare Programme

**Hansard page:** 42 (24/05/07)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Thanks for that. Has the continuation of this program been previously foreshadowed by the government?

**Mr Aldred**—I am not sure that I understand the question. The Landcare program has undergone a review and was considered through the budget process and announced in the budget.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—It was not foreshadowed before that, was it? Do you want to take that on notice?

**Mr Aldred**—Not to my recollection.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—Do you want to take that on notice?

**Mr Aldred**—Yes, I will.

**Answer:**

Prior to the 2007 Federal Budget, Australian Government Ministers flagged continuing government support for landcare in comments about natural resource management programmes beyond 2008.

However, these have not included specific references to continuation of the National Landcare Programme beyond 2007-08.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 07

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** National Landcare Programme

**Hansard page:** 42 (24/05/07)

**Senator O'Brien asked:**

**Senator O'BRIEN**—How many staff in the department are allocated for administering this program?

**Mr Shaw**—However many staff are allocated to the NLP.

**Senator O'BRIEN**—At what cost?

**Mr Shaw**—I am sorry I do not have those figures here. I can take it on notice, if you like.

**Answer:**

Sixteen full time equivalent staff in the Department were allocated to administer the National Landcare Programme in 2006-07. Salaries for these positions totalled \$1.3 million.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question no:** NRM 08

**Division/Agency:** NRM

**Topic:** Natural Heritage Trust/National Action Plan State Matching funding

**Hansard page:** 43 (24/5/07)

**Senator Ian Macdonald asked:**

Could you on notice get me details of what each state government is contributing and what the total is that each NRM body either spent or is budgeted to spend, whichever figures are more easily accessible. I am just trying to get a comparison between what the Commonwealth is contributing to these and the states. I know in one of the gulf ones there is a guy on there doing GPS work. I said to him, 'What did you do before you were employed by the NRM body to do this same work?' He said, 'I was doing the same thing.' I said, 'Why did you change?' He said, 'Oh, well, the Queensland government stopped funding me so I came and did the same work being funded by the NRM body.' I am just curious as to how consistent that sort of situation is. Perhaps if you give me those figures that will help me assess that.

**Mr Aldred**—Certainly.

**Senator IAN MACDONALD**—Thanks very much.

**Answer:**

For the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality, State and Territory governments match the total Australian Government funding in cash.

For the Natural Heritage Trust, State and Territory governments match the total Australian Government funding in cash or in-kind. In-kind funding is agreed through the Joint State and Australian Government Steering Committee. It is expected that in-kind funding is relevant to the outcomes of the Trust.

Information on regional expenditure can be viewed in the annual Regional Programs Report. These reports can be accessed on [www.nrm.gov.au/publications/annual-reports/index.html](http://www.nrm.gov.au/publications/annual-reports/index.html). The latest report is being prepared and is due for release in April 2008.



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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** NRM 09

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Impacts of climate change on fisheries

**Hansard Page:** Written question

**Senator Brown asked:**

To date, what has been the impact of climate change on fisheries and fisheries income in Australia?

**Answer:**

It is too early to quantify any variation in fisheries' incomes which may be attributable to climate change.

**Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport**

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Budget Estimates May 2007

**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** NRM 10

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Assessment and monitoring of the impacts of climate change on fisheries income

**Hansard Page:** Written question

**Senator Brown asked:**

What assessment has been done or being undertaken to monitor the impact of climate change and its cost, and potential cost to the industry?

**Answer:**

As part of the development of National Climate Change Adaptation Framework the Australian Greenhouse Office commissioned CSIRO to review current information on the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems, fisheries and aquaculture. The report is publicly available at <http://www.greenhouse.gov.au/impacts/publications/marinelife.html>

In October, 2007, the Australian Fisheries Management Forum conducted a workshop to develop a National Interim Climate Change Response Plan for Fisheries and Aquaculture. The workshop was attended by representatives from the Commonwealth and all states, and included officers from policy, management and research bodies.

Outcomes from the workshop will inform the development of a national climate change action plan for the fisheries and aquaculture sector as recommended in the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework that will form the basis for determining, mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change in the sector.

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**Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**Question:** NRM 11

**Division/Agency:** Natural Resource Management

**Topic:** Number of personnel allocated to climate change studies?

**Hansard Page:** Written question

**Senator Brown asked:**

How many people and how many people full-time equivalent jobs are allocated to climate change studies?

**Answer:**

At June 2007, there were 37.45 full-time equivalents (FTE) working on climate change across the Department. This includes positions within the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE) and the Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS).