

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 4

**Hearing:** Supplementary Budget Estimates

**Outcome:** Outcome 1

**Programme:** Biodiversity Conservation Division

**Topic:** Biodiversity Fund Forward Estimates

**Hansard Page:** 70

**Question Date:** 18 November 2013

**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Milne asked:**

Senator MILNE: I just wanted to ask about the biodiversity fund. Given that there was supposed to be, as of August 2013, \$946 million over the next four years, can you tell me, over the forward estimates, whether that \$946 million is still in place?

Mr Sullivan: There was a series of decisions taken by the previous government in terms of adjusting the amount of money that was to be made available under the biodiversity fund over the forward estimates. I can take that figure on notice. In terms of what that figure is moving forward, that will be a matter for the government's consideration of the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook and the budget process in terms of announcing what the total funding is under the biodiversity fund.

**Answer:**

The previous Government initially allocated \$945.9 million over six years to the Biodiversity Fund programme as part of the Land Sector Initiative which began in 2011.

In the May 2013 budget the previous Government redirected \$32.3 million from the Biodiversity Fund over forward estimates to other priorities. A further \$225.4 million was deferred to beyond forward year estimates. Following these measures the total Biodiversity Fund budget was reduced by \$257.7 million, leaving a total of \$688.2 million over the initial six year period.

Prior to the 2013 election the previous Government made reductions to Biodiversity Fund in the Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook of \$213 million. This left a total of \$475.5 million over the initial six year, or a total of \$347.6 million over the forward estimates.