

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2010-11, 20 October 2010

Question: E10-414

OUTCOME 10: Health System Capacity and Quality

Topic: DIETARY GUIDELINES

Written Question on Notice

Senator Colbeck asked:

- a) Which Government agencies or officials did the NHMRC consult with about 'sustainability of stocks' which has apparently been used to influence the draft dietary guidelines?
- b) Has it consulted with or received advice from any environmental advice from non-Government organisations about this matter? (HIS International, PEW, WWF, etc)?
- c) On what advice or data did the NHMRC refer to with respect to 'sustainability of (fish) stocks'?
- d) When will the final report be released?

Answer:

- a) Since a draft *A New Food Guidance System for Australia – Foundation and Total Diets* was released for public consultation, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has consulted with Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry about the use of environmental sustainability as a principle in driving the models in this document. This document is not a dietary guideline, rather it is a scientific modelling system to determine the amounts of each food group a person can consume to meet their nutritional requirements. The dietary guidelines are currently being drafted.

Sustainability of stocks was not used to influence the modelling. Environmental sustainability in terms of all aspects of food, from production to retail to consumption to waste, was one of three principles (health and wellbeing, environmental sustainability, equity) that were used to drive the modelling system.

- b) NHMRC received public consultation submissions to this document from a number of non-Government organisations. In the next phase of the Dietary Guidelines Work Program, the drafting of the guidelines, NHMRC intends to hold a number of meetings with stakeholders to inform them of the Work Program's process. Stakeholders will include Government and non-Government organisations such as the National Farmers Federation, industry bodies and any other relevant agencies.

- c) NHMRC undertook a Review of the Evidence which was used to inform the modelling system. The Working Committee also includes experts in the field on nutrition, food and the environment.

- d) The document's title has been amended to reflect its objective and is now titled *A Modelling System to Inform the Revision of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*. The final report is expected to be released in March 2011, alongside the public consultation draft of the Dietary Guidelines. The Dietary Guidelines are expected to be finalised by October 2011.