

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

Question No: 140
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.4
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: World Heritage Committee - Abbot Point
Hansard Page: 9
Question Date: 11 May 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters asked:

Dr Dripps: The topic of what is the status of the environmental impact assessment at Abbot Point and how it is intended to be managed by Australia has come up in a range of discussions, as you would anticipate, given that it was part of the 2014 decision of the World Heritage Committee. **Senator WATERS:** If you could take on notice the precise concerns that each of those 19 countries has expressed in that series of meetings you went through and provide them to us as soon as you can, that would be very helpful.

Answer:

The issues raised by countries during technical discussions on Australia's response to the World Heritage Committee's recommendations on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area have been those identified in the World Heritage Committee's recommendations, that is:

- Improvements to Australia's environmental assessment and planning processes
- Maintenance and enhancement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the site
- Management of ports and shipping
- Enhancements to action, monitoring and reporting on water quality
- Strengthened governance and resourcing, and
- How Australia is addressing climate change impacts on the property.

The specific content of these discussions, including feedback and questions asked by World Heritage Committee member countries, are treated as 'in confidence' in accordance with standard diplomatic protocol.