

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

Question No: 1
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division
Topic: GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS
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Question Date: 26 May 2014
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters asked:

Senator WATERS: What assessment did the department do to determine how organisations would be impacted by this cut?

Mr Thompson: Advice is given to the government on a range of budget measures in the budget context, so the department provided advice on this measure as it did on the others, including the impact.

Senator WATERS: So this government did ask for advice on how this particular cut would impact those organisations.

Mr Thompson: I am not going to comment on what the government asked, but the department provides advice on the range of impacts in that context of the budget.

Senator WATERS: What assessment did that department do of whether the organisations are likely to be able to access other funding to cover what has now been cut?

Mr Thompson: You are asking me to go to the content of the advice that the department provided.

Senator WATERS: No, I am asking what assessment the department did in relation to the capacity of those organisations to source funds from elsewhere to make up for these lost funds.

Mr Thompson: And I am answering, Senator, in the context of the advice that the department provided to the government at the time. As you know, it is not normal for the department to disclose the nature of the advice that it provides to government, especially in the budget context.

Senator WATERS: Right. So you can't tell me whether you did give advice on that point?

Mr Thompson: I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

As part of the budget process, the Department provided advice on the implications of terminating the Grants to Voluntary Environment, Sustainability and Heritage Organisations programme.