

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

Question No: 8
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division
Topic: 20 MILLION TREES PROGRAMME - MONITORING AND REPORTING
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 10 June 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

Could you provide any information you have on the monitoring and reporting systems, including any 'apps' (mobile phone applications) that show in real time where plantings have been undertaken as part of the 20 Million Trees Program?

Answer:

An online monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement tool (MERIT) has been developed for the project and programme reporting requirements of Australian Government natural resource management (NRM) programmes. MERIT allows grant recipients to record and upload data about the progress of their projects on a continual basis and to submit reports online. It will also increase information sharing within NRM communities and the broader public. MERIT currently contains 786 projects with 1998 project sites.

As part of MERIT, iOS (Apple) and Android mobile device applications ('apps') are being developed. Users will be able to record data and spatial information offline in the field on their tablets and load the information into MERIT when their device regains internet connectivity. This technology will be extended to all MERIT users including the 20 Millions Trees Programme.