

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

**Question No:** 21  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1.1  
**Programme:** Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)  
**Topic:** Reef funding of \$2 billion over 10 years  
**Hansard Page:** 54  
**Question Date:** 25 May 2015  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Waters asked:**

**Senator WATERS:** I am certainly not acknowledging that. I would like to know how much of that funding is new since 2013. Maybe Mr Thompson could assist with that if Dr Reichelt does not have that information to hand.

**Mr Thompson:** Not off the top of my head. I can take that on notice and come back tomorrow.

**Senator WATERS:** I will pursue that, because it does seem a little disingenuous. Of that \$2 billion over the next 10 years about \$500 million is to be spent on marine safety, and clearly that is warranted, but it is not directed at water quality and yet the minister has been marketing that money as first and foremost about improving water quality. Do either Dr Reichelt or Mr Thompson know how much of that \$2 billion is, in fact, going to water quality?

**Answer:**

In March 2015 the Australian Government announced additional funding of \$100 million for the Reef Trust, lifting the total Reef Trust investment to \$140 million – which is all new funding since 2013.

The additional \$100 million will be used to support the Reef 2050 Plan by improving and protecting biodiversity and ecosystem health, in particular through projects to improve water quality.

From 2013-14 to 2017-18, the Australian Government, through the Department of the Environment, is providing more than \$300 million in funding for the Reef. This includes committed or allocated funds of \$101.7 million from relevant components of Reef Programme and Reef Trust investments (Phases 1 and 2) for projects designed to improve the quality of water entering the Reef.

Water quality will continue to be a focus for future Reef Trust investment, with \$112.5 million still to be allocated across the priorities over 4 years to 2018–19.

Funding of \$32.0 million is also being delivered through the National Environmental Science Programme Tropical Water Quality Hub to 2020–21.