

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

**Question No:** 58  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 1.1  
**Programme:** Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)  
**Topic:** National Reserve System  
**Hansard Page:**  
**Question Date:**  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Urquhart asked:**

What steps, if any, are being undertaken by the Commonwealth to ensure adequate levels of protection for freshwater ecosystems are incorporated into the NRS? If none, what alternative programs are in place to achieve this protection?

**Answer:**

1. There is currently no dedicated funding for land acquisitions as part of the National Reserve System (NRS) programme and therefore no plans to increase freshwater ecosystems included in the NRS.
2. However the Australian Government will invest more than \$2 billion over the next four years in managing our natural resources. This will be administered through a number of key initiatives including The National Landcare Programme, 20 Million Trees Programme, Green Army Programme and the Land Sector Package. Funding also supports managing threats to wetlands nationally (including Ramsar sites) and improving the health of freshwater ecosystems through a range of measures such as restoring riparian zones and improving water quality.
3. The Government is also returning water to the environment through the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.