

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

Question No: 59
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: National Reserve System - Indigenous Protected Areas
Hansard Page:
Question Date:
Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

Is there any more funding for Indigenous Protected Areas?
Are there any areas currently being considered and consulted about with respect to dedicating them as IPAs? If yes, where are they, where are you up to in the three to four year consultation process, and who are you consulting with?
How will the Department ensure the increase in land managed, if any, is managed effectively in line with Australia's international obligations and to reduce threats?

Answer:

1. Yes. The Indigenous Protected Area programme is funded under the National Landcare Programme. Indigenous Protected Areas have a notional allocation of \$64.4 million over four years from 2014-15.
2. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet have advised that there are currently 21 IPA consultation projects: two in New South Wales, six in the Northern Territory, five in Queensland, one in South Australia, two in Victoria and four in Western Australia. These IPA consultation projects are in various stages of development, with most projects expected to declare as IPAs over the next three years. The Australian Government funds a range of Indigenous organisations to undertake consultation with the relevant traditional owners, local community members and key stakeholders with the view to developing a Plan of Management to support a potential IPA declaration.
3. For new IPAs, one of the key elements of the consultation process is the development of a Management Plan for the proposed IPA. These plans are assessed by the Australian Government against national best practice management planning guidelines which are consistent with the National Reserve System planning guidelines. These plans identify the natural and cultural values of the IPA, as well as key threats to these values, and outline a range of strategies which combine traditional ecological knowledge and western science to manage these threats in accordance with a nominated International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) management category.
4. Management of any future additions to the NRS (outside IPAs) will be an issue for state and territory governments.