

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications  
Legislation Committee**

Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment and Energy portfolio**

**Question No:** 139  
**Hearing:** Budget Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 2  
**Program:** Domestic Emissions Reduction Division (DERD)  
**Topic:** Money spent on climate change adaptation  
**Hansard Page:** 92 and 93  
**Question Date:** 23 May 2017  
**Question Type:** Spoken

**Senator Waters asked:**

Senator WATERS: How much money is the Commonwealth spending on climate change adaptation?

Ms Evans: That is a bigger question than just the adaptation research facility. There are range of things—I will defer to Ms Wilson.

Ms Wilson: The government is making a range of major investments. I am sure my colleague Nick Gales from the Australian Antarctic Division would have spoken about the 2017-18 budget allocation of \$49.8 million to meet the government's commitment to providing continued year-round support for high-priority science and long-term monitoring on Macquarie Island. The government has invested \$23.9 million over six years in the National Environmental Science program's earth systems and climate change hub. CSIRO are investing in the new Climate Science Centre in Hobart, bringing together the core of CSIRO's capability in climate modelling and observations. That is one of the reasons we have created this partnership between the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and the CSIRO—to bring the wealth of knowledge and expertise those two organisations have together. I apologise Senator Urquhart as I am going to repeat what I said to you. There has been \$56 million invested in the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility since 2007, and there is a wealth of research there. But what we heard when we went out and about and spoke to people was that what they needed now was guidance to help inform their decisions. That is why there is something now like CoastAdapt. The research is great, but they really now need assistance and guidance to help them take decisions on how to adapt to a changing climate, and that is what CoastAdapt was designed to do.

Senator WATERS: Can you please take it on notice to cumulate those figures so that I can understand the total quantum of spend on adaptation?

Ms Evans: We will take it on notice, but it is difficult to quantify some of the adaptation expenditure. We talked earlier about the fact that you see it in all sorts of programs throughout the portfolio—part of our reef funding, part of our threatened species funding and so on.

Senator WATERS: Perhaps you could estimate a proportion of the work that gets done in those—

Ms Evans: Difficult, but we can put the programs where there is a direct link—we can put those together.

**Answer:**

It is not possible to provide a definitive figure for total Commonwealth investment in climate change adaptation as action to manage the risks of a variable and changing climate are undertaken by a number of departments and agencies.

For example, last year the Department of Defence released its *Environmental Strategy 2016-2036*. One of the aims of this strategy is to deliver a sustainable estate across Defence maritime, land and aerospace areas, activities and operations. One way the Defence is working to achieve this aim is managing current and future risks associated with natural and hazards and climate change.

For the Department of the Environment and Energy, the Government is investing \$550,000 this year to establish a new partnership between the Department, the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and CSIRO.

The Government is also investing in the following programs, which have some adaptation components:

- \$23.9 million (2015 to 2021) in the Earth Systems and Climate Change Hub, part of the \$145 million National Environmental Science Programme (NESP)
  - The NESP's Tropical Water Quality Hub (\$31.98 million 2015-2021) supports the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef in the face of climate change, through research into coastal water quality and coastal management issues
- \$250 million over the next ten years to enhance Australia's Antarctic logistics and science capability through the Australian Antarctic Strategy and the 20 Year Action Plan
- \$48.9 million to meet the Government's commitment to provide continued year-round support for high priority science and long-term monitoring on Macquarie Island
- \$37 million (announced in 2016 by the Minister for Industry, Innovation and Science) for the new Climate Science Centre in Hobart
- \$1.5 million each year for the Bureau of Metrology's Pacific sea-level monitoring activities.