

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

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 142
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 2
Program: Domestic Emissions Reduction Division (DERD)
Topic: Policies for tidal inundation and coastal erosion in the Torres Strait
Hansard Page: 93
Question Date: 23 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Waters asked:

Senator WATERS: Which policies account for and address the impacts of coastal erosion and tidal inundation in the Torres Strait and, likewise, what line items are those policies linked to? We were trying to find it, and we were hoping to find it, but I have not been able to find it. I would love to find it.

Ms Evans: We will take it on notice.

Answer:

In February 2014, the Australian and Queensland Governments announced a joint funding commitment of \$26.2 million for coastal protection works in Torres Strait communities.

The Australian Government contributed \$14.2 million (2014-16) in funding, from the following agencies:

- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet - \$7 million
- Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development - \$5 million (under the Community Development Grants programme)
- The Torres Strait Regional Authority - \$2.2 million.

The Queensland Government contributed the remaining \$12 million.

All Australian Government funding has been transferred to the Torres Strait Major Infrastructure Trust. Payments are made from the Trust to the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, which is implementing the coastal protection works.

Torres Strait communities can also use the Australian Government-funded online tool, CoastAdapt, to access sea level rise data and guidance on addressing associated impacts (such as coastal erosion). CoastAdapt was developed by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, and can be found at <https://coastadapt.com.au>.

Some Torres Strait communities are currently involved in a project funded through the Australian Government's National Environment Science Program. Traditional owners are working with researchers to explore the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems, fisheries and livelihoods in the Torres Strait. This will provide an opportunity to raise awareness with key stakeholders, review the current state of local and scientific knowledge, and identify a strategic way forward for addressing priority information gaps and needs.