

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

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 16
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Corporate
Program: Corporate Strategies Division (CSD)
Topic: Environment budget
Hansard Page: 20 and 21
Question Date: 22 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Urquhart asked:

Senator URQUHART: Does the government know what its environment budget is?

Senator Birmingham: Do you want to know what we spend as a government—as the Commonwealth collectively across environment? Sure.

Senator URQUHART: As a total. I guess what are the examples other than climate change?

Senator Birmingham: Including other stakeholders or just what the Commonwealth spends?

Senator URQUHART: What is the government's budget on the environment and what are examples other than climate change? What are the sorts of things that you would budget into the budget?

Senator Birmingham: You heard some of them this morning—Landcare programs, water recovery and restoration programs and the Great Barrier Reef. But, if you want an aggregate, I am sure that the department can take that on notice and aggregate the different agencies into some sort of sum. To be honest, I am not sure that will tell you terribly much, because there is a range of different priority areas across which that spending occurs, some of which overlap with one another but also many of which then overlap with efforts of other jurisdictions and other stakeholders too.

Senator URQUHART: Dr de Brouwer, can you answer that question about the environment budget?

Dr de Brouwer: I think that, frankly, as the minister said, if you are looking for the broad impact, both the direct and the indirect impact, the very rough approximation is to sum up the spending across different activities in the department and in portfolio agencies. But I can give some examples of that. The Emissions Reduction Fund is for emissions reduction, so it has a climate change mitigation benefit. But almost all of those programs have economic or social co-benefits. Three-quarters of the funding goes to farmers and that helps farm productivity. The savannah burning programs are an important element of economic and social benefit to Indigenous communities. So there is a range, even if it is—it is very hard to find a clear delineation between what is narrowly environmental in terms of natural resources and what is the broader environment benefit. I do not have a number around summing up the different activities, but we can do that. We will take that one on notice. That is a very rough approximation.

Answer:

Statement 6 of Budget Paper No 1 for 2017-18 aggregates individual agency estimates to report the whole of government spend by sub-function.

Based on the sub-function classification the environment budget is primarily comprised of:

- environment protection;
- The Department of the Environment and Energy's component of natural resource development and
- national estate and parks.

The below tables provide a breakdown of the total spend reported on page 6-29 (table 10) for environment protection, page 6-31 (table 11) for national estates and parks and 6-36 (table 13.1 extract) for natural resource development.

Reported Expenses for Environment Protection

	2016-17 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2020-21 (\$m)
Department of the Environment and Energy	606	573	514	515	456
Clean Energy Regulator	286	294	287	299	319
Climate Change Authority	4	1	-	-	-
Other Portfolios	8	41	53	79	77
TOTAL	904	909	855	894	853

Notes:

Environment Protection sub-function includes expenses for the protection and conservation of the environment, water and water management, pollution and environment research.

Reported Expenses for National Estate and Parks

	2016-17 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2020-21 (\$m)
Department of the Environment and Energy	213	206	193	200	238
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	59	61	55	54	53
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust	18	18	20	21	22
Director of National Parks	80	80	79	77	74
Other Portfolios	44	44	41	41	41
TOTAL	414	411	388	392	428

Notes:

National Estate and Parks sub-function also includes the Australian Antarctic Program, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Reported Expenses for the Department of the Environment and Energy's component of natural resource development

	2016-17 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2020-21 (\$m)
Department of the Environment and Energy	63	63	57	63	63

Notes:

These expenses relate to the Commonwealth Environment Water Office.

Total Reported Expenses for Environment Protection, National Estate and Parks and Natural Resource Development

	2016-17 (\$m)	2017-18 (\$m)	2018-19 (\$m)	2019-20 (\$m)	2020-21 (\$m)
Department of the Environment and Energy	882	842	764	778	757
Clean Energy Regulator	286	294	287	299	319
Climate Change Authority	4	1	-	-	-
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	59	61	55	54	53
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust	18	18	20	21	22
Director of National Parks	80	80	79	77	74
Other Portfolios	52	85	94	120	118
TOTAL	1,381	1,383	1,299	1,349	1,343

Note:

These funds do not include funding for Fuel and Energy functions.