

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

Answers to questions on notice
Environment and Energy portfolio

Question No: 48
Hearing: Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Program: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: Wild dog program in Western Australia
Hansard Page: 69
Question Date: 22 May 2017
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Reynolds asked:

CHAIR: I have one final question for Mr Andrews. It relates to something that we have talked about before, and that is the terrible situation with feral dogs in Western Australia and the havoc that they are playing on many farms and pastoral stations. Can you give us an update on the program there? I have had feedback that the 1080 baits are not working. In fact, the goannas are eating them and the dogs are not. Can you perhaps update us, or take it on notice, because I would like quite a comprehensive overview of what is happening with the wild dog program in Western Australia.

Mr Andrews: Actually, I will take it on notice and consult my colleagues in the agriculture department because they provide a large amount of funding to tackle feral dogs. Some of the baits that we have been distributing—the Eradicat baits—are also controlling feral dogs to some extent. With the goannas, one thing we do not have to worry about is the goannas actually suffering because, particularly in Western Australia, they are immune to 1080. It is a biodegradable substance found in the leaves of some of the gastrolobium plants there. But obviously that does not mean it is not getting a result for the dogs. So I will take it on notice for you.

Answer:

The management of established pest animals is primarily the responsibility of state and territory governments and land managers. State and territory regulations control the use and availability of 1080 baits.

The Australian Government is assisting the West Australian Government to implement the Western Australian Wild Dog Action Plan, committing \$3.5 million to fund wild dog control activities under the plan.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources advises that 1080 is generally an effective and efficient poison for killing wild dogs, and continues to be a critical element for wild dog management activities. Evidence from first hand observations, radio collaring of individual dogs, remote camera surveys of dogs and baits, and the retrieval and testing of carcasses demonstrates that wild dogs will consume 1080 baits. Baiting can reduce wild dog populations between 55% and over 90%. Please see <http://www.pestsmart.org.au/fag-wild-dogs-and-poison-baiting/> for more information.