

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

Question No: 13
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division
Topic: GBR STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 29 October 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Waters asked:

The GBR Strategic Assessment rated underwater noise pollution as a growing and high risk to the reef and species living there and both that assessment and the subsequent Reef 2050 plan includes as an action (BA13) to “develop a guideline on assessing and managing underwater noise on species”. Similarly the recently released North East Shipping Management Plan has an action for “GBRMPA and AMSA to keep under review opportunities to conduct research into noise monitoring tools and methods and implications for ship noise mitigation strategies”. Does the Department have a role in that program of work? In particular:

- a. Who is taking responsibility for this, given the parties nominated are GBRMPA, Australian Government and Queensland Government?
- b. What is the Department’s role?
- c. Has budget been allocated for this task?
- d. What is the FTE of staff time dedicated to this in 2014-15?
- e. What is the timeline for finalising the guideline?
- f. When is a draft expected?
- g. Will the draft be open for public submissions?
- h. Which stakeholders have been consulted?
- i. Which stakeholders will be consulted?

Answer:

Under the Long-Term Sustainability Plan, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority will take the lead on the development of the guideline on assessing and managing underwater noises on species (BA13).

The guideline will be developed in consultation with relevant Australian and Queensland government agencies, including the Department of the Environment.

The action is one of a range of commitments under the Plan that will be progressed in 2015. Details of roles, responsibilities and deadlines for actions such as this one will be addressed in the first half of 2015 as the implementation plans that will underpin the *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan* are developed. Resourcing of actions will be determined after the Investment Baseline has been developed (Governance Action 4, *Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan*) and a gaps analysis has been completed.