

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

Question No: 44
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.4
Programme: Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division (WHM)
Topic: Threatened Species - Recovery Plan
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 21 October 2015
Question Type: Written

Senator Urquhart asked:

1. QON102 notes that there is a requirement under the EPBC Act that a recovery plan be reviewed every five years. How regularly has the Department hit that benchmark? Of the current existing recovery plans, how many are overdue, by how much, and why?

Answer:

Under the EPBC Act, 187 recovery plans have been reviewed leading to 94 revised recovery plans with a further 20 revised plans in preparation. Not all reviews result in a recovery plan needing revision. The Department has not completed 5 year reviews of all recovery plans. By the end of 2014, there were 208 recovery plans for which a review had not been completed within the statutory five year timeframe.

The Department is prioritising the reviews of existing recovery plans alongside the assessment of new species for listing as threatened and the preparation of conservation advices for listed species.

Before the 2007 EPBC Act amendments, the development of a recovery plan was mandatory. Therefore, those recovery plans in place or in preparation at that time had not been subject to the 2007 EPBC Act provisions that allowed for consideration of whether a recovery plan is needed for a listed species or ecological community. The Department has developed a decision support tool that is being used to review these older plans to determine if a recovery plan is still required. Forty-eight species, for which recovery plans were required, have had this decision reviewed and no longer require recovery plans. These 48 species now have conservation advices in place guiding recovery action.