

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

Question No: 78
Hearing: Supplementary Budget Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 1.1
Programme: Biodiversity Conservation Division (BCD)
Topic: Wet Tropics Management
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Question Date: 19 October 2015
Question Type: Spoken

Senator McLucas asked:

Mr Murphy: I understand that the Wet Tropics Management Authority has drafted a 10-year proposal to achieve, hopefully, yellow crazy ant eradication in the wet tropics region. The proposal seeks an initial investment of just over \$15 million for the first three years. It has been provided to Minister Hunt and to relevant state government ministers. If further funding becomes available it will be considered in the context of the priorities identified in WETMA's 10-year plan. In the interim WETMA has been encouraged to seek further funding through the Green Army program and to work in collaboration with the Queensland government.

Mr Oxley: Can I add that there is also agreed funding of \$1.9 million to the Wet Tropics Management Authority through the Natural Heritage Trust until 2017-18 for eradication of yellow crazy ants.

Senator McLUCAS: When was that money first made available, Mr Oxley?

Mr Oxley: I do not have that information.

Senator McLUCAS: My understanding is that was in 2013.

Senator WATERS: I thought that was to run out next year, not in 2017-18.

Senator McLUCAS: That is right.

Senator WATERS: Can you double-check that, please?

Mr Oxley: We can double-check that for you.

Senator McLUCAS: My understanding is that those moneys will finish very soon.

Senator WATERS: That is my understanding too.

Mr Barker: The funding of \$1.9 million that Mr Oxley referred to was made available for the 2014-15 year. That is my understanding.

Senator McLUCAS: I think it was agreed to in 2013 under Caring for our Country.

Mr Barker: It is, and it is funding that is prior to the National Landcare Program, so it is under Caring for our Country.

Senator WATERS: Can you speak up?

Mr Barker: It was funding that was available from Caring for our Country, but it was contracted, I understand, in 2014.

Senator McLUCAS: In 2014-15?

Mr Barker: From 2014, yes.

Senator McLUCAS: On a calendar year or a financial year?

Mr Barker: I would have to confirm the exact contract dates.

Answer:

The Wet Tropics Management Authority will receive \$1,997,870 (GST exclusive) from 2013-14 to 2017-18 to eradicate a large infestation of yellow crazy ants over 400 hectares within and adjacent to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The agreement commenced 9 December 2013 and expires 30 June 2018.