

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

Question No: 38
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 5
Programme: Environment Assessment and Compliance Division
Topic: EPBC Act threatened bats
Hansard Page: N/A
Question Date: 04 March 2014
Question Type: Written

Senator Rhiannon asked:

1. How many referrals to the EPBC Act that have impacts on threatened species of bats have been approved?
 - a) For each of those referrals to the EPBC Act please supply details of each bat species, the numbers for each species, the locations/localities, and the outcomes.
 - b) Are there publicly available reports about each referral and if so could you provide links to those reports or details on where they can be obtained?
2. May I have the details of the amount of money/funding spent on initiatives to specifically recover threatened species of bats, including:
 - a) The stated aim of each initiative/program - including the species and numbers of bats, location, and project design/description
 - b) The outcomes of each initiative/program, and if not yet complete, details of where each of the initiatives is up to and where the outcomes are up to
 - c) The amount of funding allocated to each initiative; the amount of funding spent so far; advice about future funding of the initiative.

Answer:

There have been 51 projects approved under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act) where a threatened listed bat species has been nominated as the 'protected item', noting one of these decisions was retrospectively revoked (EPBC 2003/1179).

Specifics such as location and species type are found in **Attachment A**. More detail of exact locations, numbers and outcomes are found on the EPBC Act website, a URL for each project has been provided in **Attachment A**, sorted by ascending EPBC number.

The National Flying-fox Monitoring Programme relies on significant in-kind support from State government agencies and volunteers. Commonwealth funding includes \$794,717 from the National Hendra Virus Research Programme (to which the Environment portfolio contributed \$1 million) and \$700,000 from the National Environment Research Programme (NERP). Funding for this programme ceases at the end of 2014.

The National Flying-fox Monitoring Programme aims to better understand the size and trends in the national population of two species of flying-foxes listed under the EPBC Act, the Grey-headed Flying-fox and the Spectacled Flying-fox. It also aims to improve understanding of the movement of those animals on a seasonal basis.

The programme covers the known range of these two species, encompassing Queensland, NSW, ACT, Victoria and South Australia. Four counts are held each year at all known flying-fox roosts.

Four national counts were held in 2013, and will continue at this frequency through 2014. The reports of each count are published on the Department of the Environment website:

www.environment.gov.au/node/16393.