



**Minister for
Environment and Climate Change**

Ref: DSE083289

File:



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04 JUL 2012

Dear Mr Davis

2012-13 BUDGET ESTIMATES - FURTHER INFORMATION

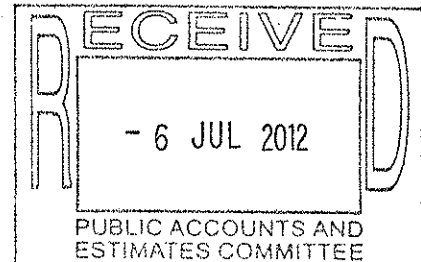
Thank you for your letter of 7 June 2012 regarding the questions taken on notice for the Environment and Climate Change portfolio budget estimates hearing held on Friday 18 May 2012.

Please find attached the responses to the questions taken on notice.

Yours sincerely

THE HON RYAN SMITH MP
Minister for Environment and Climate Change

Encl.



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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

MR DAVIS – To ask the Minister for Environment and Climate Change

1. Please provide information about what portfolio-wide discretionary grants programs are being reduced and by how much.
2. Please identify and provide values for projects and programs that have been completed, cut or reduced between 2011-12 and 2012-13.
3. Please detail the funding provided in this year's budget through the Victorian Local Sustainability Accord for regional adaptation plans for local governments.
4. Please provide details of any grant programs that have been cut from the EPA. Please indicate any changes to funding sources for EPA grant programs that have occurred (such as funding them through the Department rather than through the EPA).
5. Please:
 - a. quantify the reduction in funding to the management of bays, beaches and marine parks; and
 - b. detail the specific programs and areas of work that have received reduced funding.

REPLY:

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change: I am informed that:

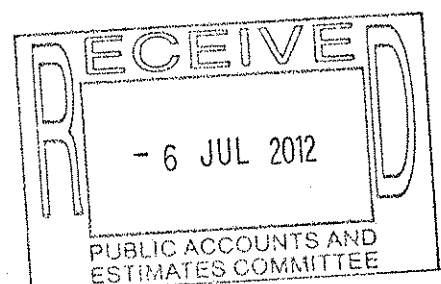
- 1. Please provide information about what portfolio-wide discretionary grants programs are being reduced and by how much.**

The Department of Sustainability and Environment is working to minimise the impacts of the 2012-13 budget savings and efficiency measures on the community and environment.

Over the next four years, the reduction in portfolio-wide discretionary grants programs will constitute less than 8% of the 2012-13 budget savings. The Department is in the process of identifying those areas in which reductions may occur.

One area of focus will be on ensuring that existing grants programs do not overlap with any new initiatives or grants programs.

It is expected that any reductions in discretionary grant programs will result in minimal impacts to the community and to the environment.



2. Please identify and provide values for projects and programs that have been completed, cut or reduced between 2011-12 and 2012-13.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment has a number of programs that were funded in 2011-12 that have been completed.

These include:

<u>Name of Program</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>2011-12 Estimates (\$m)</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Climate Change Package: Coastal Assets Database	Environment and Climate Change	0.04	This initiative has been completed with the coastal inundation data, maps and guides released by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change on 27 June 2012.
Enhancing Victoria's Parks and Reserves	Environment and Climate Change	1.10	Funding was provided to create the Cobboboonee National Park and Forest Park. This initiative is now complete.
2008-09 to 2011-12 Environmental Contribution funding projects	Water	37.60	This funding completes the second round of Environmental Contributions projects. A new range of initiatives were approved as part of the 2012-13 budget and can be found on pages 59 and 60 of 2012-13 Budget Paper No.3 listed under the output "Effective Water Management and Supply".
Future Farming Strategies: Stronger community management of evasive pests	Environment and Climate Change	0.15	This is a DPI-led initiative for the control of weeds and pests on private land. DSE's component of the initiative has been completed.
Green Plumbing Initiative	Water	4.90	This once-off initiative is part of the former Government's Jobs for the Future Economy initiative. The initiative provided incentives to encourage households and businesses to implement water efficient systems including rebates for rainwater tanks, low-flow showerheads and dual flush toilets. The initiative is now complete.

Native Vegetation and hazard mapping	Environment and Climate Change	8.40	Once-off funding was provided for this initiative and the initiative has been completed.
Sustainable Alpine Resorts	Environment and Climate Change	3.59	Once-off funding was provided as part of the 2011-12 Budget to support the operations of Lake Mountain and Mt Baw Baw alpine resorts. In 2012-13, the Department is exploring a range of options to address the ongoing issues with Lake Mountain and Mt Baw Baw alpine resorts.

For a list of asset initiatives completed in 2011-12, please refer to page 48, Budget Paper No. 4.

3. Please detail the funding provided in this year's budget through the Victorian Local Sustainability Accord for regional adaptation plans for local governments.

The Local Sustainability Accord program supports local communities to create local solutions for sustainability and environmental challenges.

The Government announced \$5.67m in grants for local government projects through the Victorian Local Sustainability Accord on 1 August 2011. Included are two regional adaptation plan projects with a total grant value of \$900,000 of which \$205,000 will be spent in the 2012-13 financial year. The regional adaptation plan projects run over multiple years.

4. Please provide details of any grant programs that have been cut from the EPA. Please indicate any changes to funding sources for EPA grant programs that have occurred (such as funding them through the Department rather than through the EPA).

The Victorian Government acknowledges the important role the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) plays in being an effective environmental regulator for the Victorian community.

No EPA grant programs have been discontinued in 2012-13. EPA will continue to implement and fund their grant programs.

5. Please:

a. quantify the reduction in funding to the management of bays, beaches and marine parks; and

b. detail the specific programs and areas of work that have received reduced funding.

Bays, beaches and marine park management fall under the Public Land Output within the portfolio.

The 2012-13 Budget Papers show a decrease in the Public Land Output cost of \$17.8 million compared to 2011-12. This reduction in the Public Land Output cost does not relate to reduced funding for bays, beaches or marine parks.

The reduction in funding primarily reflects the once off funding the Department of Sustainability and Environment received as part of the 2011-12 budget to assist in the recovery from the 2011-12 Victorian Floods.