

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Parks and Rangers:

Ocean Rubbish in Arnhem Land

Every year in Arnhem Land there are masses of rubbish washing up on the beaches. This year we are seeing more rubbish than ever before.

1. What work is being done with federal and regional counterparts to address this issue?

The Australian Government has committed \$14.8 million over three years to address the challenge of ghost nets and plastic litter in the waters and beaches of the Gulf of Carpentaria, including Arnhem Land. This initiative is being delivered by Parks Australia in partnership with NT Government agencies, Indigenous organisations and other key stakeholders. This partnership work is focused on ensuring the best outcomes in relation to managing the impact of ghost nets and marine debris.

With the commencement of the Aboriginal Ranger Grants program in 2017, Aboriginal land and sea managers from Arnhem Land have sought funding for project work focused on the removal of rubbish washing up on beaches in Arnhem Land.

For example, Dhimurru Rangers received funding under the Aboriginal Ranger Grants program to undertake marine debris management along the coastline of the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area. This two year project provided additional support to marine debris work already being undertaken by the Dhimurru Rangers and was focused on enhanced access to remote areas of coastline and hosting of volunteer support for this work.

2. What resources has the Government committed in the 2022/23 budget to tackle ocean waste?

In 2022-23, Aboriginal land and sea managers from Arnhem Land will be able to seek funding from the Aboriginal Ranger Grants program for projects related to marine debris. As the Minister for Parks and Rangers, I announced round six (2022-23) of the grants program opened on 20 July 2022.

There is up to \$2.1 million in funding available under the Land and Sea Management Fund and \$1.75 million in funding under the Ichthys LNG Coastal Management Offset. Projects seeking funding for marine debris management would be considered eligible under both funding streams.

3. How is the NT Government measuring outcomes in addressing this significant issue?

Aboriginal land and sea managers are leading the fight in addressing the impact of ghost nets and marine debris on the Arnhem Land coast. Project funding under both Territory and Federal grants have mandatory reporting requirements, and it is the reporting of outcomes achieved by Aboriginal land and sea managers that are used to measure the success of these projects.