



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2020-2021
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
25 February 2022

Asked by Ms Castley on 25 February 2022:

Mr Rutledge took on notice the following question(s):
In relation to:

MS CASTLEY: Thank you. I am just wondering, then, in the annual report it talks about protecting the endangered species funding initiative. Where is that money being pointed to?

Mr Rutledge: Sorry, Ms Castley, what is the reference in the annual report?

MS CASTLEY: Page 186, I believe, if I have got my notes here right - protecting endangered species funding.

Mr Rutledge: We will just take one moment, Ms Castley.

MS CASTLEY: Happy if you want to take that on notice, just to provide some detail around it.

Mr Rutledge: Yes, Ms Castley, to keep the committee running, why do we not take that on notice and we will get back to you on that one.

MS CASTLEY: Thank you.

MINISTER VASSAROTTI: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

- Under the *Protecting Endangered Species* initiative, the ACT Government has undertaken works to enhance the resilience of the endangered Grassland Earless Dragon and the ecosystem on which it depends.
- Grassland Earless Dragons are endangered under ACT and national legislation. The Grassland Earless Dragon's population has declined to critically low levels and may be lost without action being taken.
- From 2020, the ACT Government provided \$2.1 million over three years. This funding has enabled the establishment of a partnership between the ACT Government, local research institutions and Zoos Victoria to establish a captive breeding and

reintroduction program and implement strategic and intensive on-ground action to support the species' recovery.

- A purpose-built facility, along with a specially designed quarantine facility, that can house up to 80 of the dragons has been established at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. This bio-secure facility will keep diseases out and provide optimal conditions for the dragons' wellbeing. Larger outdoor predator-proof ring tanks have been installed that will allow ecologists to observe Grassland Earless Dragons in a more natural environment to provide important information to help manage their eventual release back into the wild.
- Page 48 of the 2020-21 Annual Report provides summary case study of this work and further information is available on the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate website at www.environment.act.gov.au/ACT-parks-conservation/environmental-offsets/monitoring-and-research/grassland-earless-dragon

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature: 

Date: 9/13/2022

By the Minister for The Environment, Ms Rebecca Vassarotti MLA