

STATE BUDGET — MARINE PARKS

**499. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Environment:**

Given that on 12 May, two days ago, the minister made a statement to the house in which she said, “The state government is committed to increasing the number of marine parks in Western Australia”, and given that today’s budget slashed the Department of Environment and Conservation budget by nearly \$54 million, where is the evidence of this commitment?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:**

I thank the member for the question. One example of our commitment to marine parks is the reservation order that I have just introduced in this house to establish the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park. The member’s suggestion that the Department of Environment and Conservation’s funding has been slashed is incorrect. The reality is that there has been a reduction in the appropriation; however, that has been offset quite significantly by an increase in landfill levies, grants and subsidies, and parks and recreation income, as well as by additional funds for the election commitments on which we are delivering. We are very much committed to the environment. We have a \$30 million capital works program, of which \$9 million is for plant and equipment for fire and emergency services. An amount of \$9 million has been allocated over four years for the Kimberley science and conservation strategy and \$3.8 million for the great western woodlands. A new herbarium will be completed this financial year. Parks and visitor services across Western Australia will be upgraded. The environment is very much a focus for this government.