

CALM, HIGH OIL CONTENT MALLEE SEEDS

2057. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development representing the Minister for the Environment
- (1) Now that CALM has had time to make further investigations regarding the availability of high oil content mallee seeds that were held by CALM. Can the Minister for the Environment confirm that the earlier figure of 13.5 million seeds is correct?
 - (2) Can the Minister for the Environment now inform this House if CALM has intellectual property rights over the high oil content mallee seeds?
 - (3) Does CALM or the Government have a policy regarding the distribution and use of the high oil content mallee seeds?
 - (4) Does the policy give priority to the use of the seeds in this State over the use of the seeds in other States?
 - (5) Can the Minister confirm that the Oil Mallee Corporation and/or the Oil Mallee Association will be planting high oil content mallee seeds in another State?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

1. Yes. However, it should be noted that this does not take into consideration seed collected as a by-product from culling plantings to create orchards. This seed has never been made available for sale.
2. CALM does not have plant breeder's rights for oil mallees. There are a number of criteria that must be met to establish such rights. For example, the varieties for which rights are sought must be morphologically distinct from the most similar varieties.
3. CALM's involvement in oil mallee research and development has been based on the need to identify and support the development of tree species that are preferably indigenous to Western Australia, and that may provide a long-term commercial option for revegetation of previously cleared agricultural land for a range of landcare, salinity and biodiversity protection benefits. To this end CALM has prioritised its supply of available improved oil mallee seed to meet demand for plantings in south-west Western Australia. CALM is presently reviewing its seed supply arrangements in consultation with nurseries and other stakeholders.
4. Yes, unless there is a surplus of seed for the local market.
5. I suggest that the Hon Member address this question direct to the Oil Mallee Company and/or the Oil Mallee Association.