

INFINITREE PROGRAM, BUDGET ALLOCATION

1049. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:

I refer to the State Government's recent announcement that it will spend \$21 million over four years on the Infitree program.

- (1) What is the total budget allocation for the promotional and advertising campaign for Infitree?
- (2) What profit is Infitree expected to deliver for the Forest Products Commission each year?
- (3) Is Infitree a separate program to the \$32 million national action plan plantation forestry initiative?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The projected total cost of the Infitree campaign is \$986 000.
- (2) The Infitree campaign is planned to provide environmental, social and economic benefits to regional areas of the State. Initial investment will be through the Forest Products Commission; however, external funding sources are currently being sought to enable the program to grow. The sources include private investment and the Commonwealth through programs such as the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Control. Returns to the Forest Products Commission depend on the extent of its investment and the development of timber and carbon markets. There is a range of potential commercial outcomes depending on the advent of these markets, particularly carbon. However, it is important that the Government take leadership in the development of such initiatives that seek to address the manifest problems of our regional areas. Financial returns are unlikely to be realised until plantations are at least 12 years old.
- (3) I refer Hon Murray Criddle to the answer to part (2), which I think adequately answers that part of the question. However, to clarify that, the proposition that was put by the State Government to the Commonwealth Government in the context of the national action plan did include Infitree as a component, but it would be impossible to relate one directly to the other. Perhaps I can provide the member with more information on that.