

NSW Budget Highlights: 2009–10

Making NSW a Greener, Cleaner State

Environment and Climate Change

The NSW Government has committed over one billion dollars in the 2009–10 financial year to making NSW a greener, cleaner State.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC) plays a pivotal role in leading and focusing our responses to the challenges of protecting and conserving our environment. Everyone in our community – households and communities, business and local and state government agencies – shares responsibility for protecting and improving our environment. The 2009–10 NSW Budget provides a strong basis for involving the whole community in responding to the difficult environmental challenges ahead.



The Hon. Carmel Tebbutt MP
Minister for Climate Change
and the Environment

Addressing climate change and its impacts in NSW

Climate change and energy efficiency

DECC coordinates NSW responses to climate change. A key part of this work is managing the Climate Change Fund to support communities, schools and businesses mitigate and adapt to climate change. Funds are made available through the Water and Energy Savings Funds and the Climate Action Grant Program.

\$208.2 million is allocated to a range of programs under the Climate Change Fund in 2009–10:

- \$97.3 million is budgeted in 2009-10 for a range of climate change mitigation initiatives, including:
 - \$32.1 million for continuing household rebates for rainwater tanks, climate-friendly hot water systems, water-efficient washing machines and the removal and recycling of old second fridges
 - \$9 million for water and energy efficiency measures in schools, of which \$5.2 million will provide energy retrofits to forty schools
 - \$5.3 million for water and energy efficiency support for public housing tenants
 - \$7.5 million is earmarked in 2009–10 to support seven large-scale renewable energy generation projects to be built by the private sector



- \$50 million for projects under the Water and Energy Savings Funds, which were established in 2005 to support the efforts of industry, government and households to use water and energy more efficiently

The \$150 million NSW Energy Efficiency Strategy under the Climate Change Fund helps families and businesses to save money by reducing energy use and emissions. The Energy Savings Fund supports many projects around NSW which are aimed at improving energy efficiency, alternative energy generation and education. The Water Savings Fund supports a wide range of water recycling, water efficiency and groundwater projects.

In 2009–10 DECC will spend \$36 million on the varied programs under the Energy Efficiency Strategy, including:

- \$15.3 million for the Low Income Household Refit program, which will provide home energy assessments for more than 50,000 low-income households
- \$5.9 million to provide energy audits and retrofits to support up to 2,500 small businesses.

Recycling and waste management

DECC uses regulation, licensing systems, education and other assistance measures to encourage councils, businesses and households to reduce and recycle waste. In 2009–10:

- \$19.8 million is budgeted to help local councils in the greater Sydney metropolitan area to improve their waste and recycling services
- \$9.7 million will be made available for waste and sustainability programs to implement the NSW Government's Waste Strategy
- \$1.4 million is to be made available to regional North Coast councils to help them provide better waste collection and recycling services.

Protecting and conserving the environment and Aboriginal heritage

Environment protection, regulation and compliance

DECC has responsibilities to protect air, water, native vegetation, threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage, and to reduce exposure of the community to harmful emissions, noise and contamination. The 2009–10 Budget supports this work through various regulation, compliance and enforcement activities:

- \$71.8 million is allocated for DECC's environmental regulation, compliance and enforcement activities
- \$3.5 million will be spent on satellite imagery to continue improvements to DECC's native vegetation and environmental monitoring and compliance activities
- \$5.6 million has been provided for major projects and programs addressing issues such as air quality, noise, climate change, land and conservation management
- \$21.3 million in Urban Sustainability and Urban Waterways grants will assist local councils to work in partnership with business and the community to improve local water quality



- \$6.3 million in new annual grants will be awarded through the Environmental Trust to community groups, councils, schools, Aboriginal organisations, registered training organisations, lead environmental community groups, State Government agencies and research bodies.

Managing NSW national parks, marine parks and other reserves

Managing fire, pests and weeds

The NSW parks system protects more than 6.7 million hectares – more than 8 per cent of NSW. As well as conservation benefits, parks provide important tourism and recreation services, but fire and pests are key threats.

- \$58 million in DECC's 2009–10 budget is to be spent managing fire, pest animals and weeds
- an additional \$3.4 million will be spent on new infrastructure and equipment for fire management.

Park infrastructure

National parks contain a large amount of essential infrastructure, used for effective management and for visitors. This infrastructure includes buildings, roads and parking areas, fire trails, walking tracks, amenities, signs, fences and drains. The 2009–10 Budget allocates:

- \$25.5 million for the maintenance of essential infrastructure to facilitate management of the reserve system, including access to and enjoyment of parks by visitors and community.
- an additional \$4.8 million will be spent on the continuing upgrade of essential public infrastructure in Kosciuszko National Park.
- \$8.1 million for replacing the ageing National Parks and Wildlife radio network, to ensure effective and safe radio communication into the future, both for everyday park management and during bushfires.

Land acquisition for parks

DECC's ongoing land acquisition program concentrates on regions and ecosystems that have low reservation levels, and lands that improve existing park boundaries to make them more manageable.

- \$8.4 million is allocated in 2009–10 for the ongoing voluntary land acquisition program to grow the national parks system across NSW. Priorities are increasing protection in areas of the State that are underrepresented at present, especially west of the ranges.

Botanic Gardens, Domain and National Herbarium of NSW

The three botanic gardens and the Domain are enjoyed by 8 million visitors each year, and support world class events. The living and preserved botanical collections are the basis for delivering education and science programs. The 2009–10 Budget provides:



- \$39.2 million for maintaining and enhancing the collections and infrastructure in three botanic gardens and the Domain and for support of associated programs in scientific research, education and recreation
- \$1.5 million in 2009/10 to be spent on capital improvements to the Botanic Gardens Trust including upgrades to Domain roads and pathways, and a new road entrance for Mount Annan Botanic Garden.

Helping to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources

Catchment Management Authorities

DECC assists the 13 catchment management authorities across NSW to undertake work and fund projects aimed at managing natural resources and restoring landscape health. The Budget identifies:

- \$27.2 million for investing in natural resource management under Catchment Action NSW. \$23.1 million of this will be delivered by the Catchment Management Authorities to fund works and projects aimed at restoring landscape health, in particular with farmers and other non-government landholders.

Estuaries, coastal lands and floodplains

DECC manages funding to local councils to undertake planning and management activities for estuaries, coastal lands and floodplains:

- \$19.1 million is to be provided to local councils in NSW under estuary, coastal land and floodplain grant programs. A new focus of this program is on preparing for sea level rise
- \$5.7 million for Bragalow-Nandewar forest industry restructuring under the Forestry Restructuring and Nature Conservation Act 1995.

Water for the environment

DECC is responsible for managing water allocations and water licences held by government for environmental use. Water entitlements are purchased under the RiverBank, Living Murray and other programs. The 2009–10 Budget includes:

- \$13.7 million for the purchase of water entitlements, with the water to be used to help restore the health of inland rivers and important wetlands.

Flood mitigation

DECC delivers grants to assist councils to meet their flood planning and management responsibilities.

- regional councils on the NSW North Coast are being allocated a combined \$3.6 million to improve the planning and management of flood mitigation measures that protect life and property.

Aboriginal co-management of parks

There are currently 16 agreements across NSW that allow joint management of parks and reserves with Aboriginal peoples. The 2009–10 Budget allocates:

- an extra \$1.2 million to continue negotiations and establish co-management arrangements between the NSW Government and Aboriginal peoples for several additional parks and reserves in NSW.





Environment Portfolio (DECC and Environmental Trust) total expenses for 2009–10 are estimated at \$1.3 billion.

The allocations for particular service groups and agencies are:

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| ➤ Climate Change, Policy and Programs | \$465.1 million |
| ➤ Environment Protection and Regulation | \$106.7 million |
| ➤ Parks and Wildlife | \$373.8 million |
| ➤ Culture and Heritage | \$14.6 million |
| ➤ Scientific Services | \$51.6 million |
| ➤ Environmental Trust | \$93.4 million |
| ➤ Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust | \$39.2 million |
| ➤ Catchment Management Authorities | \$124.7 million |



Photos:

Cover (top to bottom) – Hawkesbury River (Hawkesbury-Nepean CMA); composting (M.Lauder); sea walls (D.Wiecek/DECC); dune replantings (DECC)

Footer (left to right) – Upgrading parks (DECC); energy and water savings (DECC); rainwater tanks (S.Cohen/DECC); Flannel flowers (S.Cottrell/BGT); Discovery rangers (J Randall-Court/DECC)

Page 5: Gundabooka National Park (A.Hull/DECC)

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