



Speech by

HOWARD HOBBS

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Hansard 11 March 1999

TREE CLEARING GUIDELINES

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—NPA) (10.15 a.m.): In the past, disputes about tree clearing were ongoing and unresolved. Information generally based on inaccurate data, guesswork and political bias was the order of the day. We put together a process to resolve this dispute and 34 local tree clearing groups were formed. These were made up of a very wide reference group of all sorts of people. This was the first time we had put together a professional and scientific process whereby we could examine every avenue possible to gain accurate information—satellite imagery, species type, topography, climate, current extent of clearing, future clearing estimates and whatever else that local groups believed was necessary in their particular regions. These were the first scientific tree clearing guidelines implemented in Australia.

I have here the 34 guidelines for the various regions throughout the State. They cover a wide range of issues. It is a very professional document. It can withstand examination on the world stage. In fact, many other countries have been looking at the guidelines in order to develop their own models.

The argument that has always been around and is still being advanced is that a lot of the country is still being cleared. The reality is that a majority of the country we hear about being cleared is in fact covered by regrowth.

I understand that Minister Welford is about to abandon the process I just outlined, take a line whereby the criteria used to collect this information will be inaccurate and come down with the finding that tree clearing needs to be restricted further. I understand that an approach to Cabinet has been made along these lines.

Time expired.
