



Speech by

**LINDA LAVARCH**

**STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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**CYPRESS INDUSTRY, WESTERN QUEENSLAND**

**Mrs LAVARCH** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (6.18 p.m.): It is with delight that I rise to second the amendment to the motion moved by the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries. Both the Premier and the Minister have very clearly and very publicly given a commitment to the cypress pine industry. This commitment has been in both words and action. Tonight I want to take the opportunity to show how this Government supports and invests in jobs in primary industry, and we do this no more so than in research and development.

Research and development is critical for any industry. Funds devoted to research and development are an investment in the future, and I do not think anyone could deny that. Tonight I want to inform the House of the major research initiatives undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries for the cypress industry, but before I do that I want to talk about another research and development project which I think is very, very exciting news. However, I do not think that it has received the coverage that it should have. I take the opportunity to acknowledge the recent announcement by the Honourable Minister for Primary Industries which is not only great value but also a great coup for Queensland. Well done, Minister! In fact, I would say this is one of the most exciting things to happen in a very long time.

**Mr Sullivan:** He is an exciting Minister.

**Mrs LAVARCH:** He certainly is. From my visit to Longreach last week I can tell the House that he is well received in the rural community as well.

The exciting announcement is that Queensland has secured the exclusive world rights to commercialise the rare and endangered wollemi pine. The announcement confirmed that a Queensland tender has obtained the exclusive world rights to propagate and commercialise wollemi pine. It is a threatened species, and commercialisation has been recommended as the best way to preserve it. The successful Queensland tender, proposed by the Department of Primary Industries and Brisbane's Birkdale Nursery, will generate new jobs and new exports for Queensland. In the development phase alone 50 jobs will be created, with a multimillion-dollar export boost each year.

**Mr Mickel:** Gee, that's a lot.

**Mrs LAVARCH:** It is a lot. Well done. Last year the New South Wales Royal Botanic Gardens selected the Queensland tender, subject to further negotiations, ahead of 13 other interstate and international proponents. This joint arrangement combines the world renowned research and development expertise of the Department of Primary Industries with the international marketing skills and excellence of the Birkdale Nursery. Through research excellence, the State Government is ensuring not only that a rare and endangered plant is preserved for future generations but also that new exports and new jobs are created in the process.

Now I will speak about the major research project being undertaken in relation to cypress pine. Cypress is an Australian native timber, uniquely valuable because its heartwood is extremely resistant to decay and termites. The heartwood is durable for many decades, even under the most severe conditions, but small amounts of sapwood present on the product are not as durable and detract from its value. This research project by the Department of Primary Industries aims to extract the durability compounds from cypress sawmill wastes, sawdust and shavings and impregnate these compounds into the sapwood present on such cypress pine products as decks and cladding, adding value to both

extracted wastes and board products. By adding value to these products we are securing jobs. We are boosting the value of these already valuable products and we are enhancing their position in the marketplace.

Two other research projects have flowed from this major project and represent exciting prospects in relation to cypress pine. This cypress research work is being conducted in partnership with the Forest and Woods Product Research and Development Corporation and agencies in New South Wales. This research project further underpins the cypress industry and jobs in the industry. The industry can look forward confidently to a positive outcome from the project and expect to have a new tool for value adding to their exterior use products.

The money we invest in research and development today will be reflected in future profits and the future success of Queensland primary industries, including the cypress pine industry. The investment in research and development by this Government is a rock solid investment in the future of primary industries and it is also showing our commitment to rural communities—the timber towns in western Queensland. I think members opposite should give due recognition to that.

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