



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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NATURE CONSERVATION [FOREST RESERVES] REGULATION 2000

Ms MOLLOY (Noosa—ALP) (6.04 p.m.): Our hearts go out to the members of those families who have lost their jobs, the same as our hearts go out to future generations. Yes, there is heartache, but what heartache will there be when the trees are gone—torn down, forests raped and pillaged? To date, I have seen scant evidence from those on the other side of the House of a desire to protect our environment. I gave an undertaking to my constituents to protect our environment for the future health and wellbeing of all our families. The South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement has provided opportunities for greater integration of local government conservation planning and management. That is what the opposition is trying to destroy with this motion.

Not only are we integrating parks with local communities, we are integrating landscapes on a local and regional scale. In my electorate of Noosa, the council has a great track record of working cooperatively with the community and conservation groups to deliver outcomes that benefit the whole community and create jobs. For many years, organisations like the Noosa Parks Association have been lobbying for a more community based use of the magnificent forests that surround Noosa. The Noosa council has agreed with this approach and the implementation of the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement has provided an opportunity to create a unique set of natural assets for the community to enjoy and to augment our important tourism industry and quality of life. The opposition wants to destroy this community-driven approach for its own political purpose. These areas are being assessed as part of a wider regional landscape and are benchmarks for sensible regional planning.

Through a coordinated approach to conservation planning and management, we are improving the protection of the values that have attracted so many people to south-east Queensland, places like the Noosa electorate. In developing good working relationships and partnerships with all levels of government, we are building community ownership and involvement in protecting their environment. There is agreement by local working groups to approach local government to provide buffers to enhance the protection of parks and to preserve the quality of life that my constituents hold dear. This is being done in an integrated way by approaching local land-holders to participate in conservation strategies such as conservation agreements and land for wildlife agreements. This can only be good for conservation in Queensland and will build on the conservation outcomes achieved by the signing of the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement.

The agreement is giving real life to the community's involvement in practical, productive and local conservation outcomes. By attempting to destroy this historic agreement that was community driven, those opposite are tearing at the heart of a process that has enormous capacity for community enhancement and involvement in building social capital. When will those opposite learn that the community wants results? It wants jobs. It wants certainty. It wants quality of life. It wants to be heard and it wants to be involved; it does not want the petty politics and backroom deals that result in this sort of motion before the House tonight. If my predecessor had realised that, perhaps he would still be here instead of fishing full time. As many members know, my electorate of Noosa is one of the most beautiful and well-known areas in Queensland and relies on tourism for much of its employment.

Ms Male: It's a lovely electorate.

Ms MOLLOY: It is a lovely electorate. The implementation of the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement will build on the success of the Noosa community in marketing our special part of Queensland. It provides an opportunity to broaden the base of our tourism industry away from the sand and surf and into our beautiful hinterland, where people will visit and stay to enjoy the forests. This will help spread the economic benefits into the smaller regional communities that need it most.

Ms Male: Are you talking about jobs?

Ms MOLLOY: Something like that, yes, and not just for a few and not only for the short term. This sensible approach that we have demonstrated in Noosa is that now favoured by many stakeholders and communities actively participating in the implementation of the South-East Queensland Regional Forest Agreement. If it were to succeed, this motion would destroy the momentum and goodwill that has been achieved and invested in us. It would destroy our precious native forests and destroy the ability of future generations to enjoy them.

The scare campaign that recreational users will be locked out is just that—petty politics that has not worked and has no basis in fact. We have proved by the process so far that the community will be involved and will have a say in future sustainable use. This applies to conservation and recreational users alike and will deliver a world-class system of forest reserves that future generations will thank us for. If this House were to agree to this motion, we would be turning our backs on the very communities we are here to represent.
