



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 12 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

South-East Queensland Regional Water Quality Management Strategy

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (9.59 a.m.), by leave: This week, I joined Brisbane Lord Mayor Councillor Jim Soorley and Ipswich Mayor Councillor John Nugent to launch the South-East Queensland Regional Water Quality Management Strategy. This strategy provides a long-term plan to restore the ecological health of south-east Queensland waterways and catchments, including Moreton Bay, by the year 2020. The strategy has been produced by the Moreton Bay Waterways and Catchments Partnership on behalf of local councils, state agencies, industry and community stakeholders. The state of the waterways and Moreton Bay reflects the legacy of 150 years of degrading.

Our commitment is to arrest the decline in waterway values and to improve the health of the waterways and Moreton Bay. This strategy will not only protect the environmental values of the region's waterways but also help secure the thousands of jobs that depend on them. Our waterways are of paramount importance in three major ways—as significant environmental, economic and recreational resources. This strategy will achieve the sustainable use of our invaluable waterways by addressing these three dimensions and thereby achieving a triple bottom line outcome.

The key to addressing the management of the region's waterways is through the combined efforts of community, industry and government. The strategy provides a framework for a collaborative approach to protecting our precious natural resources. The state government has joined forces with local councils, industry groups and community representatives to form the Moreton Bay Waterways and Catchments Partnership. It involves nine state agencies, 19 local councils, six industry groups and 15 community organisations. The partnership is responsible for implementing the strategy and managing the issues facing our waterways. The partnership will undertake an ongoing program to evaluate the health of our waterways, using scientific research to identify the problems they face. It will continue to develop solutions for improving waterway health through scientific reforms, including those outlined in the strategy.

The South-East Queensland Regional Water Quality Management Strategy is a major component of the Healthy Waterways Program. The program is designed to achieve ecologically sustainable use of our waterways, including Moreton Bay, by protecting and enhancing their quality while maintaining economic and social development. The strategy is vital to the future of south-east Queensland's waterways. It contains a set of agreed targets and management actions to improve waterway health, with a particular focus on riparian and stormwater management and sewage treatment plant upgrades.

We cannot achieve everything overnight, but by working together over the coming years we can improve the health of our waterways in south-east Queensland.
