



Speech by

**Hon. KEN HAYWARD**

**MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR**

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Hansard 21 June 2001

#### **FERAL ANIMALS**

**Hon. K. W. HAYWARD** (Kallangur—ALP) (12.18 a.m.): I rise in this parliament to raise the issue of feral animals and the impact that they are having on native animals, including bird life, in national parks and other parts of Queensland, particularly when those feral animals are not controlled. Feral animals such as pigs, dogs, foxes and cats are in large numbers and their population is exploding in forestry land and national parks.

As an example, and with reference to your own area of Glass House, Madam Deputy Speaker, which you represent so ably, I have personally seen such pests in the vicinity of Mount Beerwah in the Glasshouse Mountains. Most of these feral animals are aggressive killers against which native animals have little hope. The risk is that if eradication measures are not undertaken, native animals are at risk of extinction in parts of our state. What a tragedy that would be. It would be a terrible reflection on all of us if we sit by and allow that sort of carnage to happen in the 21st century.

The environmental wetlands from Brighton, Boondall and the Brisbane Airport to the Port of Brisbane are internationally recognised for their bird life, yet those fragile ecosystems are under threat from foxes and cats. I am told that there has been no attempt made to reduce the number of feral pests from this area, with the exception of the Port of Brisbane Corporation, which undertakes a regular feral animal control.

**Mr Johnson:** How do they do that? Do you know?

**Mr HAYWARD:** I am not sure how they do it. I have just been told that the Port of Brisbane does it. The point is that the problem is obvious. While the Port of Brisbane Corporation makes the effort to take action on feral animals, there is no apparent coordination between the Brisbane Airport and local and state government. Dealing with the issue becomes somewhat hit and miss, because the animals are moving around all of the time.

Pigs, dogs, foxes and cats exist in large numbers. When dogs and cats go feral in the bush, they are very effective killers. Native wildlife is no match for them. These feral animals live in forestry land and national parks throughout Queensland. As I said before, the Glasshouse Mountains are a prime example. If action is not taken, the wildlife population of Queensland will continue to be killed and eventually threatened with extinction. Human life, of course, could also be at risk from diseases such as foot-and-mouth, rabies and other parasitic diseases that could be spread by feral animals travelling through the corridors of national parks and forestry areas throughout Queensland.

What is needed is a coordinated, systematic approach to feral animal control, recognising intergovernment sensitivities and responsibilities with appropriate funding to ensure that the eradication plan that is developed can be implemented with vigour. What a terrible tragedy we could take with us into the 21st century.

Time expired.

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