



Speech by

Paul Hoolihan

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MARINE PARKS BILL

Mr HOOLIHAN (Keppel—ALP) (5.05 p.m.): It is with pleasure that I rise to support the Marine Parks Bill. I also want to commend the previous minister, the Hon. John Mickel, and the current minister and her ministerial staff for the assistance that they have provided to me in relation to the implications of this particular bill. The bill updates the act to reflect the current needs of society and builds on our good record as set out by the member for Glass House. There is a Slim Dusty song which starts, 'Well, I've listened with patience to all your sad tales,' and I must say that the National Party does have some sad tales but even those tales are not true.

Mr Hopper: Sing it for us!

Mr HOOLIHAN: It is called *The Pub with No Beer*.

For the benefit of those ill-informed people on the other side of the House, I have to say that I do not fully agree with certain comments of previous speakers in relation to the record of the National Party government on marine parks, although the current crop does not do very well, because the original Marine Parks Act 1982 was introduced by a National Party government to give effect to the offshore constitutional settlement of 1979 which was entered into with the then Fraser government. For the information of those on the other side of the House who have previously spoken, this is known as the Emerald agreement. They can find the details of that in the issues paper from the National Oceans Office, which is run by the federal government. I will give members the web site address if they need it. The Emerald agreement in actual fact set out the need for collaboration between the Commonwealth and Queensland governments in management of the Great Barrier Reef and offshore waters.

The original act—the Seas and Submerged Lands Act—established Commonwealth jurisdiction over the seabed below low water, and that act was constitutionally valid and was the basis for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act to come into effect. The state retained responsibility for all islands other than a small number owned by the Commonwealth within the outer boundaries of the Great Barrier Reef region as well as for tidal lands and tidal waters of Queensland along the coastline and surrounding the islands. The arrangements for sharing of powers and complementary management had their genesis in the Emerald agreement, which was entered into by the Prime Minister and the Premier of Queensland on 14 June 1979, Sir Johannes Bjelke-Petersen. This agreement provided for both governments to continue to manage the islands, reefs and waters of the Great Barrier Reef in a cooperative and complementary way. More specifically, it provided for day-to-day management of the marine park to be carried out by Queensland agencies.

There were actually three documents which make up the formal agreement. The basis of agreement endorsed on 1 August 1980 was the original document setting out the arrangements and responsibilities under which the day-to-day management has operated since 1980. Then there was the main agreement signed on 10 May 1988—a time still under the rule of a National Party government. This document formalises the intentions of both governments and the authority and formally applies the basis of agreement to all sections of the park. It reiterates the basic principles in the basis of agreement and clarifies financial arrangements and the responsibility of the authority for establishing policies. This

document was not intended to be legally enforceable. But then we get to the deed of agreement, which was also signed on 10 May 1988. This document provides for the use, management and disposal of assets created by funding under the basis of agreement and the main agreement. In addition, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Queensland fisheries management agencies entered into a memorandum of understanding in July 1988—still under the rule of a National Party government. The memorandum of understanding provides guidelines for the management of fishing and collecting within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Many people in my electorate have made submissions in relation to the complementary zones that were mentioned by the National Party speakers earlier. Those submissions will ultimately form part of the present plan for the Great Barrier Reef when they have been considered by the department. One of the difficulties that arises was set out by the then minister in his second reading speech, when he stated that, if the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service is enforcing rules for the ocean, then we cannot have two sets of rules for one body of water. I have listened to the members for Toowoomba South and Burnett and other speakers wrongly claim that Queensland was free to go its own way with complementary zoning and really should do nothing. But they obviously know nothing about environmental matters. The debate is not even entirely about complementary zoning. There are many other areas of the marine park and the ocean that are covered by the amendments to the act.

I have a copy of the letter that was read out by the member for Toowoomba South. It shows that the federal government does not have very much knowledge about its own processes or obligations. Although those processes may allow complementary legislation to be introduced in Queensland—and as I said, this bill relates to many more issues than that—it ensures that the Beattie Labor government lives up to its obligations under all of its agreements with the Commonwealth and its obligations to the people of this state to protect the environment. I commend the bill to the House.