



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

Hansard Wednesday, 9 March 2005

MARINE PARKS ZONING PLAN; MARINE PARKS AND OTHER LEGISLATION REGULATION

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (9.14 pm): I support the disallowance motion moved by the shadow minister for primary industries. The Marine Parks (Great Barrier Reef Coast) Zoning Plan needs to be scrapped. This government did not consult anybody—Sunfish was not consulted, the Queensland boating industry was not consulted and the 8,400 people who wrote letters and signed petitions opposing the fishing closures were not consulted.

Complementary zoning is causing much angst up and down the Queensland coast. I believe that I can speak on behalf of the thousands of Queensland families who travel to the coast to do a spot of fishing and swimming. Complementary zones have resulted and will result in traditional recreational fishing spots being closed to these families. If they fish in these areas they will be hit with extreme fines.

If the government continues with these complementary zones, it will be responsible for discriminating against families with children. They will lose the right to fish in traditional recreational fishing areas throughout the state. I would like to know what extensive studies or reports have been commissioned to show the impact of recreational line fishing on marine biodiversity. Approximately one million Queenslanders go fishing. The adults pack the picnic basket, the kids pack the rods and collect the bait, and they head off to the beaches or to the rivers to do a spot of fishing. These people have been discriminated against because their chosen recreational activity has been banned without any scientific report to support that ban. There is little evidence to suggest that well-managed recreational line fishing reduces long-term sustainability. Complementary zoning will stop people line fishing off the beaches along the north Queensland coast in a cheap attempt to pander to the green lobby without a real investigation into how it will affect people's lives. Complementary zoning is based on precautionary principles, not facts, scientific reports or evidence. If all decisions were based on precautionary principles then no person would ever drive a car or fly a plane.

One thing that really concerns me is that the people in my electorate who like to fish make a trip once a year to the ocean unsure of the invisible boundaries. They could be hit with massive fines when their only crime is catching a fish. No-one in this House should be in any doubt about the extreme effect that complementary zoning has on the lives of Queenslanders. That is why the Beattie government's complementary zoning plan should be thrown out.