




Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 11 September 2014

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Environmental Offsets Framework

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.53 am): Queensland's new environmental offsets framework introduced this year is an important step towards practical environmentalism and is assisting industry to get on with business, while delivering great benefits for our environment. Under Labor there were five different state government offset policies in use. This mishmash approach made it complex and confusing for business and produced poor environmental outcomes. Our government's offset framework reduces the time for businesses to commence works by cutting red tape, adopting a risk based approach and removing unnecessary duplication across jurisdictions.

Importantly, this offsets framework is enshrined in legislation and the expectations are clear. Further, Madam Speaker, offset payments are now primarily significantly cheaper and certainly no more expensive than under the old framework, whilst still delivering strategic environmental outcomes. Work is also progressing on strategic approaches to offsets such as strategic offset investment corridors, direct benefit management plans and advanced offsets. The Newman government continues to consult with industry groups such as the Property Council of Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia to discuss and test the new environmental offsets framework, and we will respond quickly and decisively to make improvements to the new framework where these are needed.

I recently had the pleasure of announcing that nearly two-thirds of Curtis Island near Gladstone would be permanently protected from development under one of the biggest offset agreements ever reached in Queensland. We are working hard to deliver environmental wins for the people of Queensland. We are building the roads and the infrastructure that our growing state needs, and this acquisition is an example of how we can create jobs for Queenslanders and deliver great environmental outcomes.

In summary, the new offsets framework delivers on what Queenslanders want: the best balance of environmental protection and economic development.