




Speech By  
**Lachlan Millar**

**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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**AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: REPORT, MOTION TO  
TAKE NOTE**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.01 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Agriculture and Environment Committee report No. 22. To the member for Hinchinbrook and former natural resources minister, I say, 'Hear, hear!' This is an issue that we continue to advocate. Certainly farmers and graziers in the Fitzroy region are leaders when it comes to best management practice in agriculture. For well over 20 years, participants in the cotton industry have been good custodians and good practitioners. In fact, it was 20 years ago this year that the cotton industry introduced the best management practice model. That best management practice model is outstanding. It is regarded as a nation leader and, indeed, a world leader when it comes to practices being implemented on farms.

I call on those opposite and green groups to visit the cotton growers in the central highlands and see firsthand the enormous ability that those farmers have to protect the land and the environment. My family, along with many families on the central highlands, have been adopting the BMP for the cotton industry for well over 20 years and have seen some great initiatives undertaken and paid for by the industry—I repeat: paid for by the industry—to make sure that they implement the right programs to have sustainable agricultural farming practices in the region.

**Mr Pearce:** They don't get the recognition they deserve.

**Mr MILLAR:** I take the interjection from the member for Mirani. He is right: they do not get the recognition that they deserve.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** I take that interjection from the member for Logan. I encourage him to jump in the car or onto a plane and visit. I will show him firsthand the beef industry in Central Queensland.

**An honourable member:** What about Longreach?

**Mr MILLAR:** We can go to Longreach too, although that goes into the Eyre Basin and not into the reef. I wish to talk about the beef industry in Central Queensland. I have adopted the cattle BMP. I pay tribute to the former environment minister, Andrew Powell, for the work that he did, along with the former minister for natural resources, Andrew Cripps, and the former minister for agriculture, John McVeigh. They implemented programs such as the cattle BMP. I acknowledge the work that they did with the cattle industry. This is a way to bring together both the agricultural industry and the community, to make sure that we have sustainable practices. They are doing a great job.

I wish to pick up on the comments of the member for Hinchinbrook. He is right: it is time to stop demonising farmers and graziers when it comes to the environment. It is time to stop looking for an opportunity to have a crack at graziers and farmers who are doing the right thing and are working very hard to make sure that they have sustainable practices.

The sugar industry has done some fantastic work around Mackay, which I know very well from my former profession as an ABC rural reporter. Groups such as Mackay Sugar and the BSES, as it was known, have some fantastic programs in place to make sure that they are farming in an environmentally sustainable way. They do a good job. All they ask is to be recognised and not demonised. I call on green groups such as the WWF to stop using farmers as punching bags for political purposes. Stop doing that. They may score a couple of political scores, but otherwise it does nothing for the relationship between farmers and green groups.

**Mr Costigan:** Counterproductive.

**Mr MILLAR:** It is counterproductive. I take the interjection from the member for Whitsunday, who knows of the good work occurring in the Proserpine region, such as at the Proserpine mill, which is fantastic. I call on all members, especially those opposite, to embrace what the farmers and graziers are doing. Let us encourage them and work with them. Let us not go into political pointscoreing.