




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

World Environment Day

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.06 am): World Environment Day on Sunday, 5 June is an international day of celebration, raising awareness about the importance of caring for and protecting our environment. To celebrate World Environment Day 2016, let me remind the House of the economic importance of protecting one of the world's most iconic natural wonders—the Great Barrier Reef. This world renowned icon in our very own backyard attracts 1.9 million visitors a year, supports almost 70,000 jobs and injects \$6 billion a year into the economy. It is a treasure that we are lucky to be the custodians of. The continued health of Queensland's creeks, rivers and estuaries affecting the Great Barrier Reef is a top priority. That is why we have provided an additional \$100 million over five years towards water quality initiatives, scientific research and helping businesses transition to better environmental practices, and I am pleased to update the House that yesterday the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce has handed down its final report on how to deliver clean water for a healthy reef with 10 key recommendations.

There are a number of actions recommended by the task force that we can begin to implement immediately. These include exploring more affordable monitoring technologies to provide greater coverage of the catchments across more than 400,000 square kilometres of Queensland and progressing the design of the two major integrated projects that will allow us to road test measures recommended by the task force. Of course I cannot speak about our unique environment without mentioning Queensland's beautiful parks and forests that also contribute to the state's thriving nature based tourism industry. Each year they attract millions of international and domestic visitors who contribute over \$4.4 billion annually—28 per cent of all total tourism spending in Queensland. As we celebrate World Environment Day, it is a reminder why it is important that we conserve the natural and cultural values of these areas.

We have also been working hard to effectively manage Queensland's air and water quality and efficiently address waste issues with industry and local governments. My wish is for Queensland to be a leader in innovative resource recovery activities and for all Queenslanders to take on the reduce, re-use and recycle mantle. I am confident that the measures that the Queensland government continues to put in place to safeguard our unique environment will enable us to hand it over to future generations in as good as, if not better, condition.