




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

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2017

**NATURE CONSERVATION (SPECIAL WILDLIFE RESERVES) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Message from Deputy Governor**

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (7.49 pm): I present a message from the Deputy Governor.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): Order! The message from the Deputy Governor recommends the Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

NATURE CONSERVATION (SPECIAL WILDLIFE RESERVES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2017

*Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68*

I, CATHERINE ENA HOLMES, Deputy Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to amend the Biodiscovery Act 2004, the Environmental Offsets Act 2014, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Fossicking Act 1994, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Vegetation Management Act 1999 for particular purposes.

(sgd)

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 13 June 2017

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 13 June 2017, from the Deputy Governor recommending the Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 [\[979\]](#).

**Introduction**

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (7.49 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Biodiscovery Act 2004, the Environmental Offsets Act 2014, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Fossicking Act 1994, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Vegetation Management Act 1999 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 [\[980\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes [\[981\]](#).

The Palaszczuk government's new special wildlife reserves will enable donors from around the world to fund safe havens for Queensland's native wildlife. This legislation will create a new category of protected area, making Queensland one of the first places in the world to allow private funds to be used to safeguard habitat on privately owned land in this way.

A special wildlife reserve will essentially let private landholders and conservation groups manage their land like a national park with a similar level of protection. Just like our immensely popular national parks, these new reserves will have the potential to be great tourist attractions. Whether it is koalas or wombats, platypuses or birds or even entire ecosystems, this new class of protected area will protect them and their habitat into the future from incompatible land uses. It is also an excellent incentive for people to invest in Queensland's protected areas because a special wildlife reserve provides a level of private land protection which does not exist anywhere else in Australia. This legislation will recognise the significant efforts of the community to identify, acquire, research and manage areas of outstanding conservation significance on a par with our existing national parks.

Philanthropic land trusts like Bush Heritage Australia and the Australian Wildlife Conservancy do amazing work protecting parts of Queensland which we could never have the resources to make national parks, but Bush Heritage and others said to us that they could do even more and attract more funds in particular if we could offer national park level protections to their privately managed sanctuaries. Bush Heritage Chief Executive, Gerard O'Neill, said—

... this will give private funders absolute certainty that the conservation efforts they are supporting will be defended in perpetuity.

Queenslanders want to protect our native habitat. That is why we already have 499 nature refuges across the state that cover almost four million hectares, but some of those nature refuges meet the international criteria for national parks and should have that level of protection. A great example is Bush Heritage Australia's 56,000 hectare nature refuge on Pullen Pullen Reserve which it set up to look after the endangered and very rare night parrot. Another is the Steve Irwin reserve in Cape York which is recognised for its ecological significance. Nature refuges are managed to conserve their significant natural and cultural values and, unlike special wildlife reserves, allow for the continuation of a range of other land uses.

Nature refuges have been enormously successful and there will continue to be a place for them, but it is important for landholders who want to protect ecologically important parts of their land to have a range of tools to choose from. Queensland Trust for Nature's Nerida Bradley said that it is important that landholders can 'access protection like that offered to national parks without handing that land over to the state'. If a landholder chooses to turn their property into a special wildlife reserve, a legally binding, perpetual conservation agreement and an associated management program will be negotiated. The conservation agreement and management program will detail management outcomes and actions to ensure enduring protection of each special wildlife reserve's outstanding conservation values in order to achieve the management principles for this class of protected area. This class of protected area will be applied on a case-by-case voluntary basis in full consideration of state interests relevant to the proposal area and only with the consent of anyone whose interests in the area will be materially affected.

The bill I introduce today contains amendments to the Nature Conservation Act, the Land Act, the Land Title Act and the Environmental Offsets Act to address particular matters of a technical or clarifying nature. Firstly, the bill includes administrative changes to the Nature Conservation Act to clarify the process for recording conservation agreements and protected area declarations on the land title and to allow effective monitoring and compliance for private protected areas, as well as changes to the Land Act and Land Title Act to streamline the securing of conservation agreements over declared protected areas through land tenure processes. Secondly, the bill acknowledges that where a private protected area has been declared over leasehold land conservation is recognised as consistent with the purpose of the lease. Thirdly, the bill also allows us to regulate environmentally relevant activities that are conducted partly within Queensland waters and partially beyond in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. This will allow us to implement important protections for our marine environment by recognising that pollution does not respect boundaries between Queensland and Commonwealth waters. This amendment will deliver consistent and fair regulation in the Great Barrier Reef region to activities such as transshipping, which may be conducted either wholly in Queensland waters or across Queensland and Commonwealth waters.

Finally, the bill clarifies the administrative arrangements for approving offset proposals under the Environmental Offsets Act either before or after decisions are made under the new Planning Act. This will allow for the approval of offset proposals before or after permits are granted, providing flexibility for proponents. Special wildlife reserves are a fulfilment of the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to provide incentives for landowners to secure environmentally significant ecosystems and

corridors. The Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Atticus Fleming has said that this bill highlights the national leadership shown by the Queensland government in promoting effective conservation of private land. I commend the bill to the House.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (7.57 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### **Referral to the Agriculture and Environment Committee**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

### **Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date**

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (7.58 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Agriculture and Environment Committee report to the House on the Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 11 August 2017.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.