




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Container Refund Scheme; Environment

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring Queensland's natural beauty is protected for future generations. Last year we introduced a ban on single-use plastic bags. Queenslanders are now getting into the habit of taking their own bags to the shops, resulting in fewer plastic bags polluting the environment. Some retailers across Australia are reporting that there has been up to a 90 per cent reduction in the use of plastic bags, which is absolutely incredible.

We also introduced the container refund scheme, Containers for Change, on 1 November last year, and what a success it has been. From across the state Queenslanders have been getting behind the recycling revolution, backing local businesses and local jobs. I have had the privilege of visiting a number of refund points to witness the hard work and enthusiasm of operators, including small businesses and charities. People tell me that having the opportunity to operate a refund point has meant they can provide local employment. I have been advised that more than 600 jobs have been created from the scheme. Proof of the success of the scheme is in the figures. After 100 days more than 220 million containers have been returned. Compare that to New South Wales which, in the same time frame, had only 150 million containers returned. I would like to acknowledge all of the businesses that have had to scale up quickly to respond to the way Queenslanders have embraced this recycling initiative.

I am extremely proud to be part of a government that is making headway in protecting our environment. Unlike those opposite and their federal counterparts, we have accepted the science on climate change and set targets for climate action. We have passed strong vegetation management laws to end broadscale land clearing and we are setting up the \$500 million Land Restoration Fund, which together will ensure that Queensland does its part to reduce carbon emissions and create carbon farming opportunities. We have collaborated on groundbreaking scientific studies which have helped us understand the impacts of climate change.

Recently, a study conducted by the government in collaboration with traditional owners and the University of Adelaide into the ancient climate history of Swallow Lake on Minjerriba—North Stradbroke Island—has helped us to better understand climate change impacts on future El Nino and La Nina weather patterns. We have committed record funding to protect the Great Barrier Reef through improved water quality, and the passage of world-leading mine rehabilitation laws will ensure that mining companies are cleaning up mine sites and restoring environmental values. All of these initiatives are helping to safeguard our precious environment and protect it so it can be enjoyed by future generations.