



Speech By  
**Hon. Leeanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2020

## ADJOURNMENT

### Coronavirus, Environment, Science and Arts Program Services; Bushfire Hazard Reduction

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (2.09 pm): I would like to update the House on Queensland's environment, science and arts program services in light of coronavirus and recent announcements regarding mass gatherings. Our top priority remains the health and safety of all Queenslanders, in particular our staff, their families and the people who interact with us and with the services we provide. Significant focus has been on preparedness activity and this will continue as the situation evolves in line with advice from Queensland Health. As a service provider and stewards of the environment in which we live and of course value, the Department of Environment and Science is building flexibility into the way it operates to ensure the continuation of essential business.

To support local businesses and industry, the processing of development applications and environmental approvals will continue. Through the \$27.25 million immediate industry recovery package, the Queensland government is providing relief to tourism operators on national parks impacted by decreased patronage in the form of fee relief through to July 2020. The end of the Mon Repos nightly turtle tours has been brought forward one week to 16 March 2020 to ensure the safety of patrons and staff. The department will continue to monitor advice from health professionals and assess the need for any further park closures based on that advice. Contingency plans are being put in place to continue the management of both dangerous wildlife and stranded or entangled marine wildlife. Instances of pollution and breaches that threaten the environment will continue to be addressed proportionately and promptly. I should be clear to the House that polluters will not be able to evade the laws.

Department officers are also working with the arts sector to identify strategies and actions to best support Queensland's cultural institutions, arts companies, artists and arts workers given the nature of their business. Of course, as everyone knows, the cancellation of events attended by more than 500 people has significant and ongoing ramifications for the arts sector. While centres remain open at this time, a number of events have been cancelled or may be cancelled in the future. The Queensland Museum Network, for instance, has cancelled the World Science Festival Brisbane 2020 which was to occur between 25 and 29 March, along with some accompanying events to have occurred in Gladstone, Toowoomba and Townsville. The Queensland Performing Arts Centre is currently reviewing its forward program of events.

Lastly, a word on our important work to reduce bushfire risk. Planned hazard reduction burn programs are already well underway within our national parks and forests. They are not impacted by current events and will continue while conditions are favourable to provide the best possible protection for communities in conjunction with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.