



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 March 2021

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Reef Assist Program**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.03 am): It gives me great pleasure to update the House on the progress of the Palaszczuk government's \$10 million Reef Assist program, which is creating around 130 regional jobs and delivering 11 environmental projects in the Great Barrier Reef catchments. This program was undertaken as a key part of our economic recovery strategy, delivering jobs while improving Queensland's most iconic natural asset. I am pleased to advise that all the projects are well underway. As at the end of last month, over \$5.5 million has been injected into regional economies to help communities recover from the pandemic impacts.

New jobs have already been created, with project managers and staff being employed, and local businesses and project partners such as Landcare organisations and traditional owner groups being engaged to undertake work. Just one example is the two projects being delivered by the Wet Tropics Management Authority. This almost \$2.6 million investment is already making a huge difference by creating employment opportunities for First Nations peoples. Uriah Anning is a year 12 graduate who is taking part in this project. In his own words—

I'm really liking working on country and working in the plant nursery, and learning about rescuing and rehabilitating cassowaries. I've made some new friends and having a job that's outside and in the rainforest is pretty cool.

I am learning new skills, and now have my chainsaw, first aid, plant identification tickets, and this work accreditation will help me when I apply for jobs in the future.

Not only is this program helping to protect our environment; it is supporting young Queenslanders to get the skills and experience they need for the jobs of the future. I look forward to updating the House further as this program continues to deliver outcomes for Queenslanders.