




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Path to Treaty, Indigenous Land Use Agreements

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (10.05 am): Through my portfolio the Palaszczuk Labor government is embedding First Nations water rights in our decision-making in Queensland. It is something I am incredibly proud of and something we will continue to work on so that the steps can be taken now to continue to deliver for our First Nations groups well into the future.

We recently settled Indigenous land use agreements with traditional owners associated with Rookwood Weir in Rockhampton. Both ILUAs have now been registered with the Native Title Tribunal. The agreements include commitments to best practice environmental management and co-naming rights for some of the infrastructure. The Darumbal agreement includes a permanent water allocation for those people. The Rookwood Weir construction is Queensland's largest water infrastructure project underway at present, and these agreements are further evidence of how this project is delivering for communities in Central Queensland. We know land and water are so important to local people, and to see the way that my department, Sunwater and the traditional custodians worked together on these agreements is something that further embedded the success of this Rookwood Weir project.

As I said, under the Darumbal agreement, the traditional custodians will be provided with a permanent water allocation from Rookwood Weir once the weir is complete next year. This means that traditional owners can use this resource as an ongoing revenue stream into the future to support local programs like the Darumbal language education programs, which will ensure the traditional language continues to be passed down from generation to generation. The agreement will also deliver employment and environmental management opportunities for traditional owners during the construction and also once the weir has been completed. These agreements build on the work of my department in supporting First Nations people when it comes to water rights.

Last year during National Water Week I announced that for the first time two licences had been granted to traditional owners in the Cape York Peninsula heritage area under the region's water plan. Under the Cape York water plan, 485 gigalitres of water is reserved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on the Cape York to achieve their social, economic and cultural aspirations. This is critical to ensuring traditional owners have a greater say in water resource management here in Queensland. These are just a few examples that demonstrate the ways that this government is progressing meaningful change towards collaborative resource management with our traditional owners. I look forward to building on this strong record.