



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Indigenous Womens Ranger Network**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.10 am): Tonight, some 15,000 kilometres away from the shores of our Great Barrier Reef, the global spotlight will shine brightly on a group of 130 amazing Queensland Indigenous women. Led by Larissa Hale and the Yuku Baja Muliku women, the Indigenous Womens Ranger Network will join names like David Attenborough as one of 15 finalists from across the world in the running for the prestigious Earthshot Prize.

For thousands of years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have been caring for land and sea country. Larissa Hale said—

I was initially the first Indigenous female ranger co-ordinator for Queensland, and being the only woman in the room, it was a little bit daunting.

So she set up the group four years ago with funding from the Palaszczuk government to encourage and support women on country doing land and sea management. Growing from just 24 members in their first year to 130 today, the group work together to combine generations of knowledge with modern technology to monitor, research and protect the reef, with their efforts now serving as a blueprint for Indigenous women worldwide. While they are already winners in our eyes, I want to wish them the best of luck.

We are lucky in this state to have two of the oldest living cultures in the world, the oldest rainforest in the world and one of the largest coral reef systems, and it is critical that we work together to preserve this rich cultural and environmental heritage. It is why we have committed to doubling the number of Indigenous land and sea rangers across our state and investing \$30 million through Reef Assist to deliver projects with a focus on supporting First Nations jobs and training opportunities.

It is why today I am proud to announce that as the efforts of these women are recognised on the global stage our government will provide another \$230,000 to support the network for years to come. I had the pleasure of catching up with Larissa and many of the brilliant women rangers last week at a workshop at the Guanaba Indigenous Protected Area, hosted by Justine Dillon and the Kombumerri Rangers. As Larissa says, through the network we have 'made the big first steps, but we have a long way to go'. It is vital we continue to support these women as they work to protect the unique culture and environment that has existed for thousands and thousands of years.