



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **National Parks, Stray Cattle**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.35 pm): I rise to speak about a huge issue which has largely escaped the public eye in the form of killing cattle in national parks in Cape York. For years Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service have been performing shoot-to-kill operations, indiscriminately killing unbranded and branded cattle, often with little or no notice to surrounding landowners who own most of the cattle. These landowners who are rarely notified are then held up by government bureaucracy, often waiting months before they can obtain a permit to collect their branded cattle. Meanwhile parks and wildlife have already shot their cattle.

This is a huge economic loss to the region. I have seen firsthand in these remote areas how ringers and contractors muster cattle, which provides jobs and economic flow-on benefits right through to the local meatworks. Plus it is exciting work and it provides Indigenous ringers work opportunities which the government is currently denying them. Over the last three years more than 5,000 cattle worth more than \$6 million on today's market have been shot on the orders of the department of environment. The question has to be asked: why are neighbouring properties to Cape York national park given only one week's notice or no notice before the killing of the cattle occurs? When adequate notice is given, it is always during the wet season when it is far too difficult and dangerous to muster cattle. It is quite obvious that this government wants to drive pastoralists out of the region so they can lock it up to meet their environmental agenda.

I have been advised of local reports that cows, calves and bulls have been indiscriminately shot in the gut, the leg or elsewhere during these operations when they should be one-shot kills. The carcasses provide an easy food source for thousands of feral pigs and wild dogs living unmolested in a haven in the national parks. We have been trying for years to get the government to commit more funding to feral pig programs and to allow access for hunters in national parks to reduce pig numbers as it is a massive environment issue. However, it appears the government would rather spend a huge amount of taxpayers' money on killing perfectly good cattle instead of reducing the environmental threat that feral pigs and wild dogs pose.

I call on the minister to fix this longstanding issue, streamline the permit process, instruct the department to provide adequate notice and work with landowners to muster valuable cattle instead of destroying this income stream.