



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Cattle Management, National Parks

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (6.00 pm): I again rise to highlight the issue of cattle shoot-to-kill operations occurring in Cape York national parks. More than 5,000 cattle have been shot over a 3½-year period, and that would be worth more than \$5 million on today's market. It is important to note that much of the cattle in Cape York today would have originated from landowners. When I last spoke on this, I received massive feedback from Queenslanders who considered it bizarre that cattle can be slaughtered in such a wasteful manner.

The government are reviewing the animal protection act to strengthen animal protection laws, yet here they are away from the public eye blasting cattle and leaving them there to rot to feed the feral pigs. It is a myth that Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service can easily identify branded and unbranded cattle in thick dense bushland while hanging from a chopper. The reality is that Queensland Parks have had little to no consultation with landowners and traditional owners.

A policy shift needs to take place to ensure the best possible outcomes for all stakeholders so this terrible waste of valuable resources does not continue to occur. I have had further discussions with land and traditional owners on this, and a number of alternatives have been proposed. The No. 1 priority is to immediately stop all shoot-to-kill operations in national parks in Cape York. At the moment, it takes so long for landowners to secure a permit that Queensland Parks go in and shoot their cattle before their permits can be secured. A complete overhaul of the national park access permit system must be prioritised to ensure processing times for approval are minimal, instead of dragging on for months.

Queensland Parks must coordinate efforts between land and traditional owners to muster branded and unbranded cattle. I have been informed that this once occurred before bureaucracy replaced common sense. I have seen firsthand ringers and contractors mustering cattle, which provides jobs and economic flow-on benefits right through to the meatworks. Plus it is exciting work and it gives Indigenous ringers work opportunities, which the government currently are denying them.

Lastly, there are fantastic opportunities that exist in rounding up unbranded cattle as a resource for the bush beef industry. This is in its infancy. However, a pilot program through Normanby Station has been extremely successful. Station owners cannot believe the waste in shooting unbranded cattle. Bush beef is becoming more and more popular, with the restaurants in Cairns wanting supply to satisfy demand. I call on the minister to halt all cattle shooting and meet with representatives from Cape York to discuss this fantastic opportunity.