




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT

Land and Water Use

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (2.42 pm): One of the most important commitments I have as the member for Mirani is to stand up for the farmers in my area in any way I can. Over the past seven years we have seen farming in Queensland being slowly strangled by the Palaszczuk government, all brought to us courtesy of political technocrats with zero understanding of farming and zero empathy for farmers.

The increasing restrictions being put on farmers' land and water use are having a disproportionate impact on livestock farms that are low input, extensive systems with a light touch on the environment. Queensland beef farmers have been using improved farm management practices to reduce nutrient and chemical usage as well as farm run-off for over a decade now. Any further restrictions on their land and water use would critically undermine the industry's viability. Article 2 of the Paris Accord specifically prohibits countries from restricting food producers. This agreement aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change in a manner that does not threaten food production.

The government's net zero strategy has serious implications for all rights relating to land use and water. For a start, it will involve carpeting our rural and regional landscape with wind turbines and solar farms. A good example of that is Marlborough, and we are worried about the bat population there. This will devastate not only Queensland's visual environment but also the fertility of the land itself. Should the land later need to be reclaimed for farming, the cost of making it fertile again would be astronomical and could take years. The end result of this transition to net zero will be a decline in lifestyle and the transfer of people from low-density rural regions to crowded city suburban apartments. The implications go well beyond lifestyle, however. Farms are being taken out of production and feral pest populations are exploding. I can tell honourable members firsthand that I am getting rid of pigs every day. I should mention that if foot-and-mouth disease does first hand into Queensland, it is possible that farmers within a three-kilometre radius, depending on how it enters, would have to destroy all their livestock.

There are many concerns in regions over the increasing imposition and restrictions on living and working in reef catchment areas. For centuries the reef has experienced natural bleaching. This can be due to tropical cyclones or inland floods dumping tonnes of freshwater onto the reef. However, the reef always recovers. AIMS recently released that we have record coral growth. As someone who spends a lot of their time out there when they are not doing things with pest animals, I can vouch for that. I am always out there on the reef looking at what goes on.

At a time of economic decline in Queensland and right around the world with food shortages, broken supply chains and skyrocketing inflation, now is definitely not the time to crack down on farmers even more. We need to support our farmers. We need to make sure that our economic future is stable.