




Speech By  
**Amanda Camm**

**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 29 March 2023

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (11.31 am), continuing: I must ask: how is the minister for agriculture advocating on behalf of the stakeholders associated with his portfolio given some of the concerns raised and outlined in submissions made to the committee in regards to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill? In particular, I refer to the submissions made by the Australian Barramundi Farmers Association and the Australian Prawn Farmers Association. What was important, and it was highlighted consistently in all elements of the submissions, was the lack of transparency, the lack of consultation and the time frame around consultation which, sadly, has become a trend of this government. In fact, when it comes to legislation or changes that impact on industry this seems to be the way in which this government is now doing business.

The concerns that I raised at the start of my contribution are significant. They are significant for regional development and they are significant for the expansion of aquaculture and agriculture across my electorate of Whitsunday and more broadly across the state. I will point to one example from my electorate. Tassal is Australia's largest prawn farm. It was purchased late last year by Cooke Aquaculture, a family-run Canadian company. The farm will employ over 350 staff and its expansion will mean 220 B-doubles entering and leaving the precinct. We are also seeing some of the biggest yields in tonnage that we have ever seen from the ponds in the prawn farm.

The concerns that Tassal raised as part of their expansion application, both through the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries as well as directly with the Minister for the Environment, have gone unanswered. I note that Minister Furner has travelled to the prawn farm. I always acknowledge and welcome the government's visits to my electorate. I certainly hope that the minister is advocating to the Minister for the Environment for this significant project. I was pleased to host our shadow minister in the region as well as our shadow minister for water. Certainly I will be hosting the shadow minister for the environment before 6 May, which is when the prawn harvest season closes.

**Mr O'Connor:** I don't eat them.

**Ms CAMM:** I take that interjection. Mr O'Connor, you may not eat prawns but certainly other people all over the nation do eat our farmed prawns. The industry is full of smart science and technology. I cannot wait to showcase the sustainability of the prawn farm and also the smart science jobs being created because of aquaculture. Those smart jobs are being created in regional and rural Queensland, which is what is important.

While my contribution to the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill has been short, I acknowledge the impacts that it will have and, in particular, the government's policy settings and, more importantly, the department's ideology. While I note some of the changes facilitate a quick, hard and fast 'no' if that is the position to be taken, I certainly hope that such decisions are taken with great seriousness and look at all the elements of an application. In this state we all are stewards of the environment and we all wish to protect it. I hope that proponents and industries are given the opportunity to share their credentials as well as their visions for what they want to contribute to both the state and also environmental management practices as part of their industry stewardship.