




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Daintree Rainforest

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.01 pm): They say being in nature is good for mental health and wellbeing. I recently had the pleasure of visiting the Daintree, one of the oldest rainforests in Australia. The Daintree Rainforest is over 1,200 square kilometres and is home to many animals and plant species not found anywhere else in the world. I love my electorate for the reason that I get to have one of the oldest rainforests in my electorate. Not only that, the region is home to two UNESCO World Heritage areas, the other being the Great Barrier Reef. The natural beauty and biodiversity is what brings people to our region. Visitors come to our region to have a holiday, explore the rich biodiversity of the Daintree and get out to experience the Great Barrier Reef to take in everything it has to offer. I want to enforce that there are many benefits to being in nature. It improves your mood, reduces feelings of stress or anger and helps you get out and feel more relaxed. It improves your physical health, confidence and self-esteem.

I want to highlight that we have the most amazing places to visit in our backyard and we should not take it for granted. Places such as the Daintree and the Great Barrier Reef are at risk of the impact of climate change and we should be doing everything we can to make sure we continue to protect our greatest assets for our children and our children's children to enjoy. A few weeks ago I was invited to visit the Daintree by ClimateForce. ClimateForce's core mission is to protect and maintain two foundational symbols of the region—reef and rainforest. ClimateForce is currently delivering the Tropical ReGen project aiming to regenerate a rainforest corridor in the Daintree.

I heard about the research undertaken to bring back the natural biodiversity. ClimateForce took me out to the plantation where there were rows after rows of trees planted to regenerate acres of land that will one day grow back to the natural dense rainforest. I even got to plant a few trees and absolutely loved the feeling of giving something back to the environment. I met researchers, university students and volunteers doing incredible work to restore parts of the Daintree. I give a shout-out to Barney and Liana. Thank you for inviting me into your space and opening my eyes to the wonderful work you do to care for the environment. I love my electorate, I love the rainforest and the reef and I hope we can keep it in its natural form forever and a day so that the next generation can continue to enjoy our greatest natural assets.