



Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget, Environment

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): The Palaszczuk Labor government has a proud track record of taking decisive action and investing significant resources to ensure future generations of Queensland can enjoy our unique natural environment. This budget is no different.

This year's budget continues to deliver on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to protect and enhance Queensland's environment. It includes a more than \$450 million uplift in new funding measures across the forward estimates. The three main priorities in the department's budget are: supporting the continued move to a zero waste society; protecting and enhancing Queensland's natural environment; and strengthening First Nations partnerships. The budget includes \$234 million over the coming years to continue the delivery of our government's 10-year \$2.1 billion waste package to transform the waste and resource recovery industry. This funding will support councils and industry to invest in infrastructure and to deliver programs to reduce waste, meet resource recovery targets, create jobs and, of course, ensure we maintain no direct impact on households.

Building on last year's record investment to expand the state's network of protected areas is an allocation of \$30.6 million to expand our protected area network through high-priority land acquisitions. The budget invests \$51.9 million over the coming four years to support improved visitor experiences and infrastructure in Queensland's national parks. It includes \$3.7 million for the Ngaro walking track in the Whitsunday Islands National Park in North Queensland, part of a multiyear capital works program to upgrade and promote nature-based and World Heritage tourism opportunities. There is \$1.6 million to design and begin construction of a \$7.9 million information hub at Girraween National Park and \$1 million to upgrade visitor infrastructure at Bunya Mountains National Park. The budget also includes an additional investment of \$38.6 million over the coming years to continue the delivery of world-class management of protected areas and improve the management of Queensland's five World Heritage areas.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to working with First Nations people to protect and enhance our unique natural environment. First Nations people have a deep love, respect and knowledge of country and want to see it protected. This was, of course, evident last week when we travelled to K'gari for the event to formally reclaim the island's name, the name given to it by the Butchulla people. My meeting with Quandamooka land and sea rangers just days after being sworn in as environment minister, reinforced this deep connection.

This year's budget also includes \$49.9 million to ensure the continued employment of the expanded Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program, which is employing an additional 100 rangers, bringing the total program to 200 rangers. There is also \$38.6 million to honour co-management

commitments and negotiations with First Nations people across Queensland. This includes a 50 per cent funding uplift in respect of our ongoing work with the 19 traditional groups in the Cape York negotiations, and four rangers rising to 10 in the Lake Eyre Basin. Some \$31.9 million will be invested to implement the marine memorandum of understanding and Mulgumpin fire management programs, in partnership with the Quandamooka people. This includes six additional marine park rangers and seven ongoing.

The budget also includes \$6 million in the next four years and \$300,000 ongoing to support public safety through crocodile detection and deterrent technology and an enhanced CrocWise safety program. Funding also enables the extension of the local government flying fox roost management grant program to support management of urban flying fox roosts. Our government will continue this important work to protect Queensland's unique natural environment so it can continue to be enjoyed both now and by future generations.