




Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**

**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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**ENERGY (RENEWABLE TRANSFORMATION AND JOBS) BILL; CLEAN  
ECONOMY JOBS BILL**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (4.23 pm): I rise to participate in this cognate debate but will particularly address the benefits to the environment from the transition to renewable energy. From the outset, I acknowledge the leadership of Premier Steven Miles in announcing an ambitious and globally important emissions reduction target of 75 by '35. As a government we looked at the evidence and we found a credible pathway. It was the Premier's leadership, on being appointed, that has brought us here today. At the time of the announcement, the Queensland Conservation Council said, 'Increasing emissions reduction target to 75% by 2035 is the kind of leadership we need.'

When the government set that target last year—and I acknowledge them—the scientists in my department of environment and science worked hard to provide the science, the evidence and the confidence that led to that target. I acknowledge and really appreciate the efforts of every single person in my department who was involved in that process. They have every right to feel proud of the legacy that this will bring to Queenslanders for generations to come. It was an honour to be the minister who was privy to those conversations and to passionately advocate, as I will continue to do as long as I have the privilege of being in this House, for the importance of having a path to net zero for the future of all of our children, for every Queenslanders and for my own children.

I also acknowledge the conservation sector. They have been incredibly passionate. They have been evidence based and relentless—and they will not mind me saying so—in articulating the path to net zero and that we have to have a credible pathway. We have to be ambitious and we have to move now. It is not a question of whether we wish to. It is not a question of ideology, to pick up on the terminology used before. We have to move now. The science is clear and the climate wars should be over.

I also acknowledge and thank my ministerial colleague the member for Springwood for the strong leadership that he is showing, firstly through the world's best practice Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan and now with his considerable efforts to support decarbonisation across the Queensland economy and communities. That is a significant body of work. Not only does Minister de Brenni have the role as minister; he also feels deeply passionate about the journey and bringing everyone on that journey.

Our government acknowledges that climate change is the single biggest risk that our environment faces, that the wildlife that call Queensland home faces and that our communities face. Decarbonising our energy system is one of the most effective actions we can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1½ degrees from 2005 levels. Eliminating our contribution to climate change by tackling our emissions is vital. It is the critical step towards reducing the risks associated with more extreme weather events, coastal erosion, coral bleaching and biodiversity loss.

Members of this House are aware that global warming and climate change remain the greatest threat to one of our greatest assets, the beloved Great Barrier Reef. We see damage not only to our own reef but to every coral reef around the world. It is truly a global bleaching event of proportions that everyone should stand up and take note of. We are not only taking note of it; we are acting. While that event is still unfolding and the full extent of the impacts will not be known for some months, we know that the severity of the impacts that climate change is having on our iconic environment, on biodiversity loss and on the loss of Indigenous cultural heritage sites are extraordinary. We need to act now. We know that climate change accelerates that loss, species extinctions are increasing and the impacts of major threats are making our ecosystems more vulnerable.

Tackling climate change through our Energy and Jobs Plan means that we are taking our responsibility seriously and are contributing to the national goal of no more extinctions and restoring biodiversity. An important principle of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is that the energy transition is coordinated in a way that preserves Queensland's environment by ensuring the development of clean energy maximises opportunities for positive coexistence, preserves the local environment and promotes biodiversity.

This bill does not remove or reduce any of Queensland's existing land use planning or environmental assessment requirements that are in place to protect our unique and valuable threatened species and ecosystems, and it supports sustained development through the legislative framework for land use planning and important existing protections for biodiversity, including managing the impacts of habitat loss through the Vegetation Management Act. Renewable energy projects will continue to be subject—and rightly so—to rigorous environmental assessment processes under the relevant local, state and national environment and planning laws. This will ensure that impacts to the environment are avoided, minimised through effective mitigation measures or, as a last resort, offset through restoration measures.

Time is short and I want to finish as I started by saying that Minister de Brenni is focused on ensuring a just transition for workers and communities, but we need to act now. We know that our government has a clear, credible pathway to achieve these targets. We also know that the LNP has absolutely no credible pathway to take real action on climate change. Every Queenslander deserves strong leadership in this respect. Every young Queenslander is demanding and calling for it. That is what our government will always give. I commend the bill to the House and I commend Minister de Brenni and the Premier for their strong leadership in this regard.