




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 11 September 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Environmental Protection

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.12 am): The Miles Labor government is doing what matters for Queenslanders by protecting Queensland's iconic natural environment and the species that call it home. An important part of this work is protecting areas of high environmental and cultural value in perpetuity. Thanks to our Labor government, since 2015 around 1.88 million hectares of land has been added to the protected area estate in Queensland. That is an area the equivalent of 14 times the Brisbane local government area. This historic expansion has seen the total area of protected land in Queensland increase from 13.1 million hectares to almost 15 million hectares, or an area roughly the size of England and Wales combined. Since the start of this year, the Miles government has acquired more than half a million hectares of environmentally significant land for future dedication as protected areas, all part of and made possible by a record \$262½ million funding commitment over four years. Only Labor has made a long-term commitment to increase protected areas to 17 per cent of Queensland's land mass and we are delivering on that commitment.

I am pleased today to advise the House of the latest example of our Labor government's determination to protect Queensland's environment with the establishment of a 54,000-hectare Greater Glider Forest Park. The Greater Glider Forest Park will expand and link protected areas of eastern hardwoods from Conondale National Park near Maleny northward to Cordalba National Park near Childers. Within the areas of the Greater Glider Forest Park, native timber harvesting will no longer be permitted. The greater glider is an iconic marsupial, listed as endangered under both Queensland and national environmental laws. It is critical for the conservation of the greater glider and other species that we protect Queensland's high-value ecosystems. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Queensland Conservation Council, with whom we were pleased to work to make this announcement and protect Queensland greater gliders.

The Miles Labor government has a proud track record in working to protect threatened species and their habitats in Queensland. We will always value the biodiversity of this state and we will never water down reef protections, weaken tree-clearing protections, abandon the waste levy, axe renewable energy projects or cut climate change programs, which was absolutely and very clearly the record of those opposite. Only a Labor state government can be trusted to protect Queensland's unique environment and only a Labor state government will take real and credible action on climate change in this state.