



Speech By  
**Sandy Bolton**


**MEMBER FOR NOOSA**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Noosa Electorate, Environment**

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (9.38 pm): Noosa is iconic for its natural assets that have been hard fought for over decades and Queensland is one of the most diverse environments on the planet. We have 13 out of the 14 different types of world biomes, four World Heritage listed sites and three of five Australian UNESCO biosphere reserves. These are key selling points for our tourism.

The protection of these must be prioritised yet seems to be a missing component of the Destination 2045 plan. Attaching labels such as ecotourism is not enough, especially when it is regenerative tourism that is internationally trending. While the plan proposes doubling the size of the tourism industry to \$84 billion annually within 20 years—that is 47 million visitors flying in and an additional 40,000 hotel rooms—there is nothing on how we are to manage this increase, whether to our beaches, roads, hospitals or policing, though it seeks to ensure controlled access to sensitive environments, which is a positive. We already see the impacts from uncontrolled access to our Cooloola Recreation Area where dangerous driving, dune habitat and turtle destruction as well as dumping of human waste has not been properly addressed. For eight years we have fought to get an equivalent ratio for maintaining our national parks as other jurisdictions. NPAQ says an extra \$220 million over four years and \$80 million ongoing annually is needed. The extra \$118 million announced has no time period nor detail of what it is for, and it is not enough.

Then we go to the Queensland shark plan. The KPMG review said that the current program harms our environment, recommending to remove shark nets during whale migration season as done elsewhere. Despite this and after five years of trialling and researching environmentally friendly alternates, including drones, the plan instead increases outdated approaches by emphasising all-year shark net use, the expansion of nets and more baiting. We are going backwards instead of forward into harnessing our unique and key selling points. The reality is we are constantly pleading for extra resources for frontline agencies, mitigating practices to reduce damages and consistent funding for our volunteers who work endlessly to wage wars—wars against plastics on our beaches and in our waterways, rubbish, weeds and waste—while applying in the never-ending cycle of yearly applications for funds which is disempowering. Ultimately, if we cannot manage the current impacts and fund mitigations, how would we going forward with even more? We cannot trash what is our most valuable drawcards. This is business 101 protecting the very thing essential for our businesses and communities to prosper now and into the future. Controlling access to sensitive areas will be a positive start, including the Cooloola Recreation Area.