

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1008

asked on Tuesday, 7 August 2007

MS PALASZCZUK ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER IN NORTH QUEENSLAND (MR WALLACE)—

QUESTION:

Will he outline his portfolio responsibilities with respect to the recently announced ClimateSmart 2050 Climate Change Strategy.

ANSWER:

Queensland is already positioned as a world leader in climate research and application. The Queensland Climate Change Centre of Excellence (QCCCE) was established this year, as part of my Department, and is a specialist unit that brings together policy and scientific expertise across Government.

Among the many initiatives contained within ClimateSmart 2050, there are four that my department has lead responsibility for. These are ClimateSmart Adaptation 2007-2012, a state planning policy for climate change, a carbon offsets policy, and Green Invest. Details of these initiatives are as follows.

ClimateSmart Adaptation Plan

Adaptation planning recognises Queensland's vulnerability to the consequences of climate change, and focuses on early planning to manage risks, avoid future costs and maximise potential benefits. The uncertainty about the nature and magnitude of climate change impacts means that ongoing investment in research will remain critical in guiding a response.

Following extensive community consultation, this comprehensive plan is designed to guide Queensland's climate adaptation response. Adaptation planning will make sure that the community, economy and environment are prepared for climate change, and that future opportunities in these sectors are identified and realised. The Plan outlines adaptation strategies to be undertaken in the areas of water planning and services, human settlements, natural environment and landscape, emergency services and human health, tourism, business and industry, and agriculture.

State Planning Policy

The State Government will be developing a state planning policy for climate change that will ensure that climate change issues are incorporated into planning schemes and development assessments. Developing a state planning policy for climate change will ensure that areas vulnerable to climate

change are identified in planning schemes and appropriate development controls are exercised in and adjacent to these areas.

Queensland Carbon Offsets Policy

Queensland's carbon offsets policy will ensure the State is positioned to benefit from potential offset opportunities that will be available through a proposed national emissions trading scheme. It will assist Queensland's industries that will provide or purchase carbon offsets, to prepare for the future.

Landholders have made a large contribution to greenhouse gas emission reduction through the *Vegetation Management Act 1999* (the Act). The Act saw the end of broadscale land clearing of native vegetation in Queensland on 1 January 2007, assisting Australia in meeting its Kyoto targets. Landholders are looking for opportunities under this policy, to participate in the potential benefits brought about by participation in a future carbon market.

As part of this policy, the Queensland Government is investigating the potential for regrowth vegetation to be utilised as a carbon offset. As opportunities for global emissions trading emerge, the Government will increasingly direct research, development and extension into efforts to help landholders access opportunities for carbon sequestration in forestry, grazing lands and cropping activities.

Green Invest

The Queensland Government is developing a policy framework for the use of environmental offsets (currently excluding carbon) to compensate for any unavoidable negative environmental impacts that might result from necessary development. The Government is also establishing an offsets exchange facility called Green Invest, as a mechanism to assist developers in finding offsets for vegetation clearing. Green Invest also has the potential to facilitate carbon offsetting arrangements. Consultation with agricultural, forestry and secondary industrial sectors will help to determine the potential application of this facility for the future carbon market.

The department is also a contributing agency to other ClimateSmart 2050 initiatives.