

Question on Notice

No. 1439

Asked on Tuesday, 9 October 2007

MS MALE asked The Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure and Planning (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

Would the Minister please provide assurances that the Northern Pipeline inter-connector will not simply take water away from Sunshine Coast residents for the benefit of Brisbane residents?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Glass House for her question.

The Northern Pipeline Inter-connector is a project prescribed in the *Water Amendment Regulation (No. 6) 2006* to deliver up to 65ML of water per day to other areas by maximising the sustainable take from Sunshine Coast storages.

The project is a key component of the South East Queensland (SEQ) Water Grid which is being implemented in response to the extended severe drought conditions and to improve water security for the region.

The water targeted for transfer to southern areas is surplus to the notional requirements of Sunshine Coast users and within the supply capacity of existing sources, in particular, Baroon Pocket Dam, Wappa Dam / Cooloolabin system, Lake Macdonald, Borumba Dam and the Mary River.

The Northern Pipeline Inter-connector and SEQ Water Grid are about facilitating the regional sharing of water resources and achieving a more efficient use of existing and future supplies. Water security for the Sunshine Coast – both short term and long term - will not be compromised because:-

- the project includes the construction of a new 20ML/day Water Treatment Plant at Ewen Maddock Dam that will enable this supply source to be reconnected to the Caloundra / Maroochy distribution network and partially offset the short-term transfer of water to southern areas;
- the project introduces some operational flexibility for the distribution of bulk water on the Sunshine Coast;

- the pipeline is being designed with two-way flow capacity. As Government has indicated, this will not be necessary in the short term but the design will allow for reverse flow implementation if it is required in the future, to provide the Sunshine Coast with the same water security offered to other communities connected to the Water Grid;
- the pipeline can accommodate flows from alternate sources such as the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam (should it be approved) thereby providing enhanced long-term water supply security as well as access to additional supplies to meet the future water needs of the Sunshine Coast.