

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 721

asked on Tuesday, 22 May 2007

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

QUESTION:

Will he outline the contribution the Vegetation Management Act 1999 has for climate change issues as they are of particular interest to the people of Redcliffe?

ANSWER:

The *Vegetation Management Act 1999* (the Act) was modified in 2004, such that one of the purposes of the Act is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Act achieves this by bringing a halt to broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation in Queensland by 31 December 2006. I can advise that this milestone was met, resulting in the reduction in overall greenhouse emissions in Queensland by an estimated 20 mega-tonnes of carbon, Australia's single biggest contribution to climate change abatement to date.

Recently, the Act was modified as part of amendments passed in the *Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2007*, to allow landholders to voluntarily declare areas and protect their properties under the Act. A key benefit of the new voluntary declaration process is its potential to provide protection for native vegetation that is being planted or managed to address carbon emissions. This can support a framework for corporate and community responsibility, providing a readily accessible tool for protecting vegetation secured through the many emerging carbon offsetting programs.

Areas not currently protected, including native regrowth vegetation, and areas planted as part of re-vegetation programs, can play a role as important carbon sinks. Through these amendments, they can be protected to provide not only important carbon offsets, but also to assist in climate change adaptation by reconnecting wildlife corridors and providing habitat for species movement.