QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1482

asked on Thursday, 8 October 2009

MRS MILLER ASKED THE MINISTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY (MS JONES)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the partnership established with the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society to expand the wireless sensor network over the next two years in the Springbrook Plateau— What will the expanded network achieve?

ANSWER:
The Springbrook Wireless Sensor Network project is now moving into full operation, after a successful 'proof of concept' phase.

This project will deliver one of Australia's largest and most advanced remote environmental monitoring networks. This innovative project is being delivered through a collaborative partnership between DERM, CSIRO and the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society.

The sensor network will operate across an area of more than fifty hectares, on land acquired at Springbrook by the Queensland Government. The land was acquired under the South East Queensland Conservation Initiative to help protect and regenerate this internationally significant area of high biodiversity. The land adjoins the "Gondwana Rainforests of Australia" World Heritage Area and much of it was previously cleared and used as grazing land. As project partners, the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society are rehabilitating the environmental values of the land before it is added to the Springbrook National Park.

The sensor network will provide information in near real-time to project scientists on the environmental conditions, vegetation growth and recovery of biodiversity in the area.

Using techniques developed for automated human speech recognition, it will also be capable of automatically identifying species of frogs and birds based on their calls, telling us much about the recovery of the environment during and after rehabilitation.

More importantly, the technologies and methodologies developed during this collaboration will have widespread application in areas including water quality, agriculture, forestry and climate change on a local, national and international scale.