

## QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 942

asked on Tuesday, 14 June 2011

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MR KNUTH ASKED THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (MS JONES)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Water Resource (Barron) Amendment Plan 2009 introduced by the government and as the government boasted about the benefits which the amended plan would bestow on Tableland irrigators by facilitating water trading—

Why is the government now persecuting these irrigators (who were given the expectation of being able to access much needed additional water allocation through trading whilst denying them the opportunity by the failure to amend the resource operations plan)?

ANSWER:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Water Initiative, the Queensland Government is committed to introducing water trading in priority areas across Queensland. Water trading occurs in areas where a Water Resource Plan establishes a framework for trading and the corresponding Resource Operations Plan (ROP) details the specific rules and arrangements under which trading can occur.

In the Barron catchment, the Government has already established over 2,000 tradable water allocations within the supply area for the Mareeba Dimbulah Water Supply Scheme. Under a draft amendment to the Barron ROP that was released last year, the Government intends to extend trading opportunities to include unsupplemented water users in the upper Barron River catchment.

The draft amendment to the ROP has been through a rigorous process including public consultation, additional modelling and technical assessment in response to public submissions and a referral panel process.

Approval of the final Barron ROP is expected to occur over the next few months.

Under the *Water Act 2000*, the holder of a water entitlement must comply with the terms and conditions of that water entitlement. Failure to do so, is an offence under the Water Act and the department has an obligation to investigate such instances of non compliance and to take appropriate action. The fact that water trading opportunities are yet to be introduced is not a reasonable justification for non compliance.