

Question on Notice

No. 115

Asked on Thursday, 15 February 2024

MS S BOLTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Cooloola Recreation Area and Teewah continuing to experience unacceptable dangerous driving and environmental damage to dunes and turtle hatcheries from 4WD's during and around high tide—

Will the Minister advise when the government will release the long fought for recommendations to see an end to this devastation?

ANSWER:

The Cooloola Recreation Area, which includes Teewah Beach and Teewah camping zone, is one of the most popular locations for day and overnight visitors managed by the Queensland Government in south east Queensland.

Importantly, this is also the traditional lands of the Butchulla and Kabi Kabi peoples. Careful planning and management is required to balance visitor safety and experience with the conservation of natural, cultural and social values.

Ensuring there are opportunities for visitors to experience unique natural areas in memorable, safe and sustainable ways is important so that current and future generations may continue to enjoy them.

A statutory management planning process is in progress for the area. Importantly for the first time, this is being done in partnership with Traditional Owners.

The Sustainable Visitor Capacity Management study (the study) is an initial part of the planning process. The study assessed current site demands and impacts, and surveyed user and stakeholder groups to identify values and views regarding current visitation and sentiment towards visitor management options and priorities for inclusion in the planning process. The Queensland Government plans to release the study and Government response in early 2024.

The findings and recommendations from the study informs the draft Cooloola Recreation Area Management Plan (the plan), which is projected to be released for public consultation in early 2024. The plan will build on and enhance the current management strategies in place. It will look to balance the needs of multiple user groups and Traditional Owners without negatively impacting on the natural, cultural and social values of the area and the quality of visitor experience.