



JM 19/5/04

John Mickel MP
Environment Minister

Ministerial Statement - State Of The Environment
Queensland 2003

Mr Speaker, Queensland's environment underpins key industries such as tourism.

It generates jobs and economic growth, particularly in regional areas.

Its protection is paramount.

That is why the Queensland Government is committed to ensuring its environmental policies are based on the most up-to-date science available.

The Environmental Protection Agency has completed an extensive audit of Queensland's environment which will provide the Government with the scientific data it needs to strike the right balance between environmental protection and development.

The *State of the Environment Report Queensland 2003* is the second comprehensive report card on the health of Queensland's environment.

I seek leave to table the report.

The report builds on the findings of the inaugural report which was delivered in 1999 and highlights the growing pains being experienced by a growing state.

- The Queensland Greenhouse Strategy
- The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan
- The State Coastal Management Plan
- The establishment of the Office of Urban Management
- Establishment of the Trust for Nature
- The Cleaner Energy Policy
- Translink
- The South East Queensland Forestry Agreement
- Participation in the National Action Plan for Salinity
- And the *Water Act 2000*

We are being transparent about the state of the environment and our response to environmental issues.

We will not put these issues in the too-hard basket as our political opponents have done.

This report provides a valuable information base for community, industry and government to make informed decisions about environmental and natural resource management.

I look forward to working with the community and industry to address its findings and take the next steps towards the protection of our natural assets.

The report is available on the internet at www.epa.qld.gov.au

Mr Speaker, I also seek leave to table a letter in response to a question asked by the Member for Lockyer last week.

It provides a snapshot of several key resource management areas: the atmosphere, land, waterways, coasts, biodiversity, human settlements, and natural and cultural heritage.

The 2003 State of the Environment Report is a valuable resource for future planning and aims to contribute to better environmental management practices across the state.

It confirms the challenges we are facing are increasing urban, industrial and land use pressures on the coast and the Great Barrier Reef, population growth and its impact on energy and water use and transport infrastructure, and climate change.

We will use its findings to ensure we get the balance right between creating jobs, encouraging economic growth and sustainable development, and protecting the environment.

The report provides a regional analysis of issues where possible, to assist natural resource management groups and local governments by providing contextual information for planning and management purposes.

It also highlights some of the successful partnerships involving the community, industry and government where significant progress is being made in addressing many of the issues raised within the report.

Some of this good work is presented in the case studies featured within the report.

The Queensland Government is also addressing some of the issues raised in the 2003 report through initiatives such as:

- Vegetation management laws to end broad-scale remnant tree clearing by 2006