



Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Our Ref: CTS 10564/20
Your Ref: A559592

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17 June 2020

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2020 regarding Parliamentary Petition No. 3235-19 concerning the transfer of State forests to national parks.

The South East Queensland Forests Agreement (the Agreement) was signed by the Queensland Government, the timber industry and the conservation sector in 1999. The Agreement was created to eventually finalise native timber production in State forests and transition these areas to the conservation estate. As part of the Agreement, and to create continuity for business, long-term sales permits (supply contracts) were granted by the Queensland Government for the supply of State-owned native timber from State forest lands. In south east Queensland these permits end on 31 December 2024.

In November 2019 the Queensland Government launched the Timber Industry Action Plan (the Action Plan) and reaffirmed that hardwood forest harvesting will end in the South East Queensland Regional Plan area (south of Noosa) in 2024, as originally planned in the 1999 Agreement. This commitment will result in a progressive transfer of up to 20,000 hectares of high value conservation land to the Queensland conservation estate before 2024.

It is the Government's intention to honour the 1999 Agreement and our commitment to growing Queensland's protected area estate. The Action Plan builds on the more than one million hectares the Palaszczuk Government has added to the protected area estate since being elected in 2015 while continuing to support regional employment.

The Action Plan provides for an extension of an additional two years to continue hardwood timber harvesting in Wide Bay Burnett to 2026, helping to secure jobs and economic development in this region and enable time for a two-year study to identify sustainable future options for timber supply, including on private land, to be completed in 2021.

Queensland's protected area estate, including national parks, support more than 17,000 jobs through tourism and provide extensive opportunities for people to engage in recreation across the State. This includes supporting visitors using four wheel drives and road registered motorcycles to explore these natural areas on roads within these lands, and bush camping and fishing where specified.

The recent lifting of some of the COVID-19 restrictions to enable people greater access to the outdoors has highlighted how popular our national parks are, with a strong return of visitors to many parks across Queensland.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Leanne', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Leanne Enoch MP

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