



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Thursday, 18 June 2009

RECREATIONAL FISHING, KOALA HABITAT

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (11.20 pm): I rise to speak about two recent developments relevant to the environment in Cleveland and the broader Redland City, that is, recreational fishing and koalas.

I recently attended the annual Moreton Bay Fishing Challenge at Redland Bay, along with my Redlands colleague, Peter Dowling, and the Federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming. It was noticeable that no-one attended from the Labor Party or the Greens Party. They obviously do not care about the recreational fishers, particularly since Labor and the Greens deserted fishers at the last election with the Greens' preference deal. We joined many hundreds of people—fishing mates, mum and dad fishers, children and grandpas. It was a great family event.

I want to acknowledge the great work of the local amateur fishing clubs in Redland City. The fact that so many people attended the event shows how popular recreational fishing is among other recreational uses of the bay. It is also interesting to note that these recreational fishers—young, middle-age and old-age—are being educated in such clubs to be responsible fishers and to protect the environment. I welcome the growth in environmentally friendly recreational fishing practice, despite the attempts of this Labor government and extreme green groups to demonise all Queensland recreational fishers as environmental vandals. Sustainability of fishing is considered important by the vast majority of recreational fishers. I note also that for some fishing groups, for example ECOfishers, sustainability is a core value. ECOfishers is a community based family fishing organisation committed to enjoying fishing while protecting the environment. However, can I suggest that ecofishing itself is more than a club; it is a movement inspired by the ideal of environmentally friendly and sustainable fishing. Ecofishing is growing as a movement in Cleveland and the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

This state government could take a leaf out of the ecofishing book when it comes to practising conservation in Cleveland and the Redland City area. I refer to the plight of the koala in the Redlands. Recent reports by several wildlife groups raise the tragic possibility that the koalas of Redland City could become extinct in the next few years. I make the point that this rapid koala decline is happening right under the nose of this government.

Further, this government has not only failed to protect the koalas, but has directly contributed to the problem. I refer to the clearing of the koala habitat at the site of the future Thornlands South State School. Between late 2008 and late April 2009 this government sent in the bulldozers and completely cleared the site, despite submissions from the council to stop the bulldozing and retain some of the koala habitat. In spite of the government's conservationist rhetoric to freeze clearing of such koala habitat, it continued to bulldoze ahead. The Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability and the Minister for Education and Training could have prevented it at any time but chose not to. They have not explained their actions. This government's environmental credentials are shot.

(Time expired)