



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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MORETON BAY, BOATING AND FISHING

Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (10.18 pm): I rise to continue the debate about boating and fishing issues in the bayside areas of my electorate of Cleveland and the broader Moreton Bay, issues that extrapolate to other parts of coastal Queensland. Last weekend I attended the Tinnie and Tackle Show at the RNA Showgrounds. Tens of thousands of boaties and anglers attended this peak marine event. It was clear that boaties and fishers are ropable about the anti-fishing Bligh government that has sold them out. In March 2009 the government imposed permanent exclusion zones, or green preference zones, upon Moreton Bay boaties and anglers. The government says it has compensated boaties and fishers for their losses. Closer scrutiny of this claim reveals it is false.

Firstly, it grossly undercompensated commercial fishers for their licences; secondly, it allowed some commercial fishers to buy other licences and to continue fishing the bay as they always did; thirdly, the same number of commercial fishers are now competing but in a much smaller space due to the exclusions; fourthly, the charter boat operators were sneakily redefined as non-commercial commercials so that the government could exclude them from the buyback—so they got nothing; fifthly, recreational fishers were told that they would receive adequate compensation in the form of artificial reefs. While they are happy to have reefs, they have been very slow in coming. No boaties or fishers think this is fair compensation for the loss of the fish-rich areas of the bay; it is just a small consolation prize. The only thing delivered so far was the *Tiwi Pearl* disaster. The sustainability minister lost control of the project because she sent the boat out into a storm, anchor ropes predictably broke free and the boat prematurely sunk and ended up in an unintended location. We could easily have ended up with another beached *Cherry Venture* if not for luck.

Sixthly, 2 April is D-Day, or dilly day. It marks the day when the government's ban on inverted crab dillies comes in. The fisheries department said that this ban was based on turtle deaths, but when asked how many turtle deaths there had been the minister and his department had no idea. To my surprise, through a question on notice the sustainability minister revealed that it was one turtle death. Although any loss of marine life is regrettable, to ban an extremely popular form of fishing based on one turtle death is outrageous and terrible public policy. We must continue our efforts to reduce turtle deaths from the main human sources of ingested plastics, trawler nets, boat propeller strikes and even water pollution which has an impact.

My seventh point relates to the imposed Coral Sea no-fishing zones. On a federal level, the no-fishing zoning is driven by pseudoscientific green lobby groups like the PEW foundation which masquerades as independent research groups. The Marine Queensland report of January 2010 found that Minister Garrett relied too heavily on such faulty science. There are major faults in the government's coastal fishing strategy and it needs to immediately review this ridiculous crab dilly ban.