

From: Hannah Jackson
Sent: Friday, 23 February 2018 8:56 AM
To: Tina Langford
Subject: 180224 Veg Management - The Economist - WWF.docx
Attachments: 180224 Veg Management - The Economist - WWF.docx

Tina, are you able to include this document with the Minister's documents for her meeting on Wednesday at 3:30 with the Conservation Council and WWF?

Thanks
Hannah

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RTI Act 2009

Queensland is one of the world's worst places for deforestation

1,000 rugby pitches' worth of forest disappear every day

Feb 24th 2018 | Sydney

MOST deforestation takes place in poor countries. In richer places, trees tend to multiply. Australia is an unhappy exception. Land clearance is rampant along its eastern coast, as farmers take advantage of lax laws to make room for cattle to feed Asia. WWF, a charity, now ranks Australia alongside Borneo and the Congo Basin as one of the world's 11 worst "fronts" for deforestation.

The worst damage occurs in the north-eastern state of Queensland, which has more trees left to fell than places to the south, where agriculture is more established. It has been responsible for over half of Australia's land clearance since the 1970s. Its bulldozers are at present busier than they have been for a decade. They erased 395,000 hectares of forest, including huge tracts of ancient vegetation, between 2015 and 2016—the equivalent of 1,000 rugby pitches a day. As a share of its forested area, Queensland is mowing down trees twice as fast as Brazil.

Australia has lost almost half its native forest since British colonialists arrived, and much of what remains is degraded. For a time, it seemed that the clear-cutting might come to an end: in the early 2000s several state governments passed bills to reduce deforestation. But in the past decade these have been wound back in every state. Queensland's land clearance has more than doubled since conservatives loosened its forestry law in 2013, allowing farmers to "thin" trees by up to 75% without a permit. Neighbouring New South Wales recently enacted a similar rule.

Conservationists blame powerful agricultural lobbies. These retort that controls on land clearance push up food prices and cost jobs. Family farmers lament that trees obstruct the big machinery needed to keep their land productive. They know that empty fields are worth perhaps five times more than those peppered with vegetation. In 2014 a landowner in New South Wales murdered an environment officer who was investigating illegal bulldozing. (Authorities in the state are examining at least 300 cases of illegal tree-clearing.)

Yet clearing land eventually hurts farmers too because, without trees, soil erodes and grows saltier. Deforestation releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, spurring global warming, and reduces regional rainfall. Perhaps 45m animals were killed in Queensland's bushland bulldozing between 2015 and 2016. Loss of habitat has brought many species, including the koala, to the brink of extinction. The Great Barrier Reef, which is already suffering from climate change, is also harmed by the extra sediment washed into the ocean, which can prevent coral from photosynthesising.

Permissive forestry laws seem especially odd given the billions of dollars the government spends planting trees, fighting climate change and conserving native species. In 2016 Queensland's minority Labor government tried to pass a bill to strengthen controls on land clearance once again. It was defeated by a hair. But Labor, which won a state election late last year, has promised to reintroduce the legislation. This time, it holds a majority.

BRIEFING NOTE – MINISTER

Subject Meeting with 73(2)Irrelevant **The Wilderness Society**
Approval required by 10.00am, Wednesday 17 January 2018

DEP REP

Ms Georgine Roodenrys, Executive Director, Climate Change Policy Branch, 3330 5829,
Georgine.roodenrys@ehp.qld.gov.au

Ms Megan Surawski, Manager – Industry and Communications, Climate Change Policy Branch,
3330 5156, megan.surawski@ehp.qld.gov.au

BACKGROUND

- The Wilderness Society (TWS) is a not-for-profit environmental advocacy organisation formed in 1976 focused on “protecting, promoting and restoring wilderness and natural processes across Australia.”
- TWS met regularly with Deputy Premier Jackie Trad MP and former Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for the Great Barrier Reef, Honourable Dr Steven Miles, on addressing Queensland’s land clearing rates and returning Queensland’s vegetation management legislation to pre-2013 requirements during the Palaszczuk Government’s first term.

KEY ISSUES

- TWS’ Queensland’s campaign is primarily focused on the problem of land clearing.
- The 2015–16 Statewide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS), was released on 5 October 2017 and reported that land clearing had reached a rate of 395,000 hectares with clearing in the Great Barrier Reef catchments increasing by almost 50% since 2012–13.
- The high rate of land clearing means Queensland is Australia’s largest source of land sector greenhouse gas emissions noting that New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and Tasmania are all net carbon ‘sinks’, that is, where more carbon is stored in the landscape than is produced.
- Queensland’s land sector is actively participating in the Commonwealth Government’s Emissions Reduction Fund with 125 vegetation management projects registered that have generated over 4.1 million tonnes of carbon abatement (MtCO₂e) and over \$49 million in offset payments to date.
- During the 2017 state election, the Palaszczuk Government committed to restoring vegetation management protections and investing \$500 million to undertake carbon farming with environmental co-benefits in key ecosystems across Queensland.
- Also during the 2017 election, rural sector peak bodies such as the Queensland Farmers Federation and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) indicated support for market-based mechanisms that incentivised managing land for ecosystem services like carbon sequestration as important for managing land clearing rates.

Land clearing

Deputee Position:

- Deforestation is:
 - killing native wildlife (an estimated 68 million wildlife over two years in Queensland);
 - harming the Great Barrier Reef;
 - degrading soils;
 - destroying forest and bushlands; and
 - contributing to climate change.

R

- TWS is advocating for new laws with a long-term vision of zero deforestation in Australia including:
 - ending deforestation;
 - investing \$300 million in dedicated fund to support farmers and indigenous communities to regrow forests and restore land; and
 - support development of clean, "green beef" industry that can be marketed as deforestation-free.

Departmental Suggested Response:

- The Queensland Government is committed to introducing legislation to control land clearing and protect remnant and high conservation value, non-remnant vegetation.
- However, regulation will only address a proportion of the land clearing. This is why the government has committed to providing additional incentives and support of new industries such as 'carbon farming', which generate carbon credits through improved land management.
- One of the Palaszczuk Government's flagship environmental commitments is a \$500 million Land Restoration Fund (LRF) to support the growing carbon farming sector, focusing on supplying high quality carbon credits with verifiable co-benefits such as koala and threatened species habitat protection, improved water quality and Indigenous economic development.
- The Palaszczuk Government welcomes MLA's November 2017 announcement of an aspirational vision for a carbon neutral Australian meat industry by 2030 and looks forward to opportunity to work with MLA and other organisations on achieving similar ambitions.

Endorsed

Noted / Approved / Not Approved

Jamie Merrick
Director-General
 / /

Leeanne Enoch (or Chief of Staff on behalf of)
**Minister for Environment and the Great
 Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and
 Minister for the Arts**
 / /

<i>Minister or Director-General comments</i>

Media release required: Yes No

Electoralates: Statewide

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

MEETING BRIEF – MINISTER

SUBJECT Meeting Brief with Queensland Conservation Council, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and The Wilderness Society

Date: Wednesday 28 February 2018

Time: 3:30 pm

Attendees: Mr Jamie Merrick, Director General, Department of Environment and Science
Ms Alena Tracey, Senior Director, Department of Environment and Science
Mr Tony Roberts, Deputy-Director General, Environmental Policy and Planning
Ms Georgine Roodenrys, Executive Director, Climate Change Policy Branch

Purpose of meeting: Discuss Queensland policies related to vegetation management

Summary of the issues:

- Queensland Conservation Council (QCC) is a not-for-profit environmental organisation that coordinates within the conservation sector “to protect, conserve and sustain” Queensland’s environment.
- QCC wrote to Minister Enoch on 18 February 2018 outlining its concerns regarding vegetation management - **Attachment 1**.
- The Wilderness Society (TWS) is a not-for-profit environmental advocacy organisation focused on “protecting, promoting and restoring wilderness and natural processes across Australia”. Briefing Note related to this item can be found at **Attachment 2**.
- WWF is an international not-for-profit environmental organisation focused on “conservation of environment and wildlife”. WWF wrote to Minister Enoch on 12 December 2017 – see **Attachment 3**. A response to WWF is currently progressing through approvals.
- The potential issues and concerns the organisation attendees may have include:
 - the absence of amendments to the Environmental Offsets Act 2014 in the 2018 Vegetation Amendment Bill; and
 - retaining of the self-assessable codes and their strength to limit unnecessary clearing for the purposes of thinning and fodder.

Points of relevance:

Carbon offsets and vegetation management

- Queensland’s land sector is actively participating in carbon farming and the Commonwealth Government’s Emissions Reduction Fund.
- There are currently 128 registered vegetation management projects that have generated almost 4.8 million tonnes of carbon abatement valued at an estimated \$56 million in offset payments to date.

Land Clearing

- Driving down excessive clearing rates is at the forefront of the Queensland Government’s agenda and work is well underway to deliver the commitments outlined in the *Saving Habitat, Protecting Wildlife and Restoring Land: Ending broadscale tree clearing in Queensland (again)* policy.
- The Queensland Government remains committed to restoring vegetation management legislation to protect remnant and high conservation value non-remnant vegetation.

Land Restoration Fund (LRF)

- The Queensland Government is in the process of establishing the flagship \$500 million LRF.
- The LRF will directly support Queensland based land sector reduction projects and additional biodiversity and vegetation protection by facilitating projects that generate high quality carbon credits with verifiable co-benefits such as threatened species protection and water quality improvement in the Great Barrier Reef.

Clearing of Vegetation in Queensland: Potential Triggers under the Nature Conservation Act 1992

- Vegetation clearing in Queensland may trigger the involvement of the Department of Environment and Science under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (the NC Act) pertaining to protected plants, tampering with an animal breeding place, koala conservation and wetlands.

Protected Plants

- In Queensland, all plants that are native to Australia are regarded as 'protected plants' under the NC Act.
- A flora survey trigger map is prepared under the NC Act and identifies high-risk areas where individual plant species that are endangered, vulnerable or near threatened (EVNT) are present or likely to be present.
- It is a requirement before commencing any clearing that a copy of the flora survey trigger map on the department's website be obtained to determine whether any part of the area to be cleared is within a high-risk area.
- If the flora survey finds EVNT plants within the proposed clearing impact area, a clearing permit is required from the department before clearing can commence.
- If the flora survey does not find any such plants within the proposed clearing impact area – or the clearing can avoid such plants by at least 100 metres – a protected plants clearing permit is not required.
- Information about the protected plants framework is available on the department's website at: <www.ehp.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/protected-plants/>.

Tampering with a Breeding Place

- The Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 prohibits tampering with a native animal breeding place except under specific conditions, which include the activity being part of a species management program (SMP) approved by the department.
- A SMP provides specific information on the species and habitat covered by the plan, identifies potential impacts on the species from the land clearing and sets out appropriate management actions to help avoid, mitigate and manage those potential impacts.
- Animal breeding places include obvious structures such as bird nests and tree hollows, as well as more obscure places such as amphibian or frog habitat where breeding takes place.
- Further information about SMPs is available on the department's website at <www.ehp.qld.gov.au/licences-permits/plants-animals/species-management-program/>.

Koala Conservation

- Under the Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation Plan 2017, any person clearing a koala habitat tree in Koala District A (South East Queensland) or Koala District B (Wide Bay and Fraser Coast), of more than 10 centimetres in diameter at 1.3 metres high, must undertake the clearing in the presence of a koala spotter.
- Clearing must also be conducted sequentially to ensure the safety of all koalas located on the site and so they are able to move on their own accord during the clearing activity without human intervention.

Wetlands

- The department is directly responsible for the protection, conservation and management of wetlands in Queensland—a responsibility shared with local government and the Australian Government.
- There are many different programs, policies and laws affecting wetlands in Queensland so a proponent is advised to request a map showing regulated wetland areas that may affect his/her property.
- Information about this is available at: <www.ehp.qld.gov.au/ecosystems/wetlands/wetlands.html>.

Environmental Offsets

- Amendments to the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* will be considered as part of the comprehensive review of the Environmental Offsets Framework during this term of government.
- Conservation groups will be consulted during the comprehensive review of the framework.

CURRENT POSITION

- *Land Clearing*
 - The government is committed to introducing legislation to control land clearing and protect remnant and high conservation value, non-remnant vegetation.
 - The government intends to maintain self-assessable codes particularly for the purpose of thinning and fodder harvesting because of the flexibility they provide to landholders.
 - However, regulation will only address a proportion of the land clearing which is why the government has committed to providing additional incentives and support of new industries such as 'carbon farming', which generate carbon credits through improved land management.
 - One of the government's flagship environmental commitments is a \$500 million LRF support the growing carbon farming sector, focusing on supplying high quality carbon credits with verifiable co-benefits such as koala and threatened species habitat protection, improved water quality and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development.

Cabinet-in-confidence

s.73 - Irrelevant Information

From: Peta Johnston [Peta.Johnston@dsiti.qld.gov.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 9 January 2018 3:19 PM
To: Tina Langford
CC: Jerome Pang; Alena Tracey
Subject: FW: CTS 32664/17 - The Wilderness Society meeting brief
Attachments: Wilderness Society_Brief for Minister meeting.docx

Hi Tina – as requested attached is a meeting brief for the Minister’s meeting with the Wilderness Society on 17 January 18 – Environment prepared a hard copy which I will give to Jerome.

Jerome – I will pop down and see you, as you sent out a corro request this morning for the same correspondence.

thanks

Peta Johnston

Departmental Liaison Officer

Office of Director-General

Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation
Lv 33, 1 William Street, Brisbane

P 3719 7993

Customers first | Ideas into action | Unleash potential | Be courageous | Empower people

From: DLO DES [mailto:DLO.DES@ehp.qld.gov.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 9 January 2018 3:02 PM
To: Peta Johnston <Peta.Johnston@dsiti.qld.gov.au>
Subject: CTS 32664/17 - The Wilderness Society meeting brief

Peta

As requested, word version of the meeting brief.

The BN prepared by former EHP has been cut and pasted into the new DES template.

Regards

Andrea

Andrea Kerridge

Senior Correspondence Officer

Ministerial and Executive Correspondence Unit

Governance and Strategy

Corporate Services

Department of Environment and Science

P 07 3330 6263 E andrea.kerridge@ehp.qld.gov.au

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Published on DES Disclosure Log
RTI Act 2009

Subject	Meeting with	73(2)Irrelevant	The Wilderness Society
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Date: Wednesday, 17 January 2018

Time: 10.00am

Attendees:

Ms Georgine Roodenrys, Executive Director, Climate Change Policy Branch, 3330 5829, Georgine.roodenrys@ehp.qld.gov.au
Ms Megan Surawski, Manager – Industry and Communications, Climate Change Policy Branch, 3330 5156, megan.surawski@ehp.qld.gov.au

Purpose of meeting: Introduction to Minister Enoch

Summary of the issues:

- The Wilderness Society (TWS) is a not-for-profit environmental advocacy organisation formed in 1976 focused on “protecting, promoting and restoring wilderness and natural processes across Australia”.
- TWS met regularly with the Deputy Premier, Jackie Trad MP and former Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, the Honourable Dr Steven Miles MP, on addressing Queensland’s land clearing rates and returning Queensland’s vegetation management legislation to pre-2013 requirements during the Palaszczuk Government’s first term.

Points of relevance:

- TWS Queensland’s campaign is primarily focused on the problem of land clearing.
- The 2015–16 Statewide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS) was released on 5 October 2017 and reported that land clearing had reached a rate of 395,000 hectares with clearing in the Great Barrier Reef catchments increasing by almost 50 per cent since 2012–13.
- The high rate of land clearing means Queensland is Australia’s largest source of land sector greenhouse gas emissions noting that New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and Tasmania are all net carbon ‘sinks’, that is, where more carbon is stored in the landscape than is produced.
- Queensland’s land sector is actively participating in the Commonwealth Government’s Emissions Reduction Fund with 125 vegetation management projects registered that have generated over 4.1 million tonnes of carbon abatement (MtCO₂e) and over \$49 million in offset payments to date.
- During the 2017 State Election, the Palaszczuk Government committed to restoring vegetation management protections and investing \$500 million to undertake carbon farming with environmental co-benefits in key ecosystems across Queensland.
- Also during the 2017 election, rural sector peak bodies such as the Queensland Farmers Federation and Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) indicated support for market-based mechanisms that incentivised managing land for ecosystem services like carbon sequestration as important for managing land clearing rates.

CURRENT POSITION

Land clearing

Deputee Position:

- Deforestation is:
 - killing native wildlife (an estimated 68 million wildlife over two years in Queensland);
 - harming the Great Barrier Reef;
 - degrading soils;
 - destroying forest and bushlands; and
 - contributing to climate change.

- TWS is advocating for new laws with a long-term vision of zero deforestation in Australia including:
 - ending deforestation;
 - investing \$300 million in dedicated fund to support farmers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to regrow forests and restore land; and
 - support development of clean, “green beef” industry that can be marketed as deforestation-free.

Departmental Suggested Response:

- The government is committed to introducing legislation to control land clearing and protect remnant and high conservation value, non-remnant vegetation.
- However, regulation will only address a proportion of the land clearing which is why the government has committed to providing additional incentives and support of new industries such as ‘carbon farming’, which generate carbon credits through improved land management.
- One of the government’s flagship environmental commitments is a \$500 million Land Restoration Fund to support the growing carbon farming sector, focusing on supplying high quality carbon credits with verifiable co-benefits such as koala and threatened species habitat protection, improved water quality and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development.
- The government welcomes MLA’s November 2017 announcement of an aspirational vision for a carbon neutral Australian meat industry by 2030 and looks forward to the opportunity to work with MLA and other organisations on achieving similar ambitions.

From: DLO DES [DLO.DES@ehp.qld.gov.au]

Sent: Wednesday, 10 January 2018 12:46 PM

To: Tina Langford

CC: Virginia Dale

Subject: DES CTS 32664/17 - FW: Minister Enoch meeting with The Wilderness Society – 17 January 2018

For your return Tina

Re: Minister Enoch meeting with The Wilderness Society – 17 January 2018

The meeting brief has been forwarded to the Office of the DG for consideration prior to forwarding to you.

Regards

Andrea



Ms Andrea Kerridge

Departmental Liaison Officer - Environment

Ministerial and Executive Correspondence Unit

Governance and Strategy

Corporate Services

Department of Environment and Science

P 07 3330 6263 E dlo.des@ehp.qld.gov.au

Level 32, 1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

GPO Box 2454, Brisbane QLD 4001

From: GEORGA Margaret

Sent: Thursday, 14 December 2017 2:41 PM

To: DLO DES <DLO.DES@ehp.qld.gov.au>

Subject: 10 JAN - CTS 32664/17 - FW: Minister Enoch meeting with The Wilderness Society

Hi Andrea – please see below request from Tina for a meeting briefing note for Minister Enoch.

Thanks

Margaret



Margaret Georga

Senior Project Officer

Office of the Director-General

Department of Environment and Heritage Protection

P 07 3330 6295

Level 32, 1 William Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

GPO Box 2454, Brisbane QLD 4001



From: Tina Langford [<mailto:Tina.Langford@ministerial.qld.gov.au>]
Sent: Thursday, 14 December 2017 1:44 PM
To: GEORGA Margaret <Margaret.Georga@ehp.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Minister Enoch meeting with The Wilderness Society

Hi Margaret

I have arranged for Minister to meet with 73(2)Irrelevant The Wilderness Society, on Wednesday 17 January 2018 at 10am.

Can you please arrange a meeting brief, and a dept rep.

Many thanks,
Tina.

Tina Langford

Executive Assistant/Office Manager

Office of Hon Leeanne Enoch MP

Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef

Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

P 371 97017

1 William Street



Brisbane 4000

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