



David CRISAFULLI MP

Shadow Minister for Environment, Science and the Great Barrier Reef
Shadow Minister for Tourism

Louise Matthiesson
Director
Queensland Conservation Council

Via email: isabella.morand@qldconservation.org.au

Dear Ms Matthiesson,

The LNP has an ambitious plan to stimulate the economy, create a decade of secure jobs and lead Queensland out of this recession.

We will use this strong economy to invest in the expansion of protected areas and ensure our natural environment is maintained for future generations.

Native Vegetation

The LNP's plan to supercharge the regions, invest for growth and unleash Queensland industry includes supporting our agricultural industries that provide essential food security and jobs for Queensland to be able to flourish and grow.

Under the Palaszczuk Labor Government, the impact of unfair and unworkable laws has continued to hurt our agricultural industries and provide uncertainty in environmental protection. As such the LNP is committed to reviewing and reforming the current laws to ensure a balance and deliver long-term sensible environmental landscape management policy for all Queenslanders.

The LNP is committed to delivering fair and balanced laws that deliver the following principles:

- Provide certainty of process and encourage investment
- Ensure property rights for landholders
- Support regional economic development, jobs and food security
- Acknowledges and supports Queensland's diverse and varied biodiverse ecological regions
- Considers the impacts of drought, bushfires and flooding

The LNP is committed to working with agricultural, community and environmental stakeholders to ensure our environmental assets are protected. We will allow for sustainable growth of economically significant agriculture, protect Queensland's rich biodiversity and support our farmers to produce the local home-grown food and fibre our state needs.

We are committed to ensuring the Queensland Conservation Council is closely involved with the development of the new framework. The LNP will not be re-instating the 2013 vegetation management laws. New laws developed will consider input from the review and will establish a modern framework that looks to the future.

A future LNP Government will ensure that any landscape management in Reef catchment areas is conducted in a sensible manner that considers the impact on the Reef. The LNP will retain category R protections that provide vegetation buffers near and around watercourses in all Great Barrier Reef catchments. We will also maintain Category A which allows landholders to transfer land for permanent nature refuges – this is a part of our commitment to property rights in allowing landholders to make practical conservation on their properties.

The LNP is not reintroducing high-value and irrigated high-agriculture clearing codes. Instead, the LNP supports a sensible and common-sense approach to landscape development that is approved based on both an economic return and through a rigorous assessment process. This will be determined through the review, in conjunction with the Queensland Conservation Council.

Protected Areas & Biodiversity

A future LNP Government will continue our party's strong record of environmental protection to ensure our kids and their kids enjoy Queensland's natural beauty.

Creating protected areas has been part of the Liberal National tradition in Queensland for more than a century. Our record on protecting Queensland's invaluable natural environment includes:

- establishing Queensland's first national parks, first marine parks and largest national park;
- creating over 100 national parks, including two thirds of the state's most visited parks;
- founding the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service;
- World Heritage listing of the Great Barrier Reef; and
- establishing over a million hectares of nature refuges in a single term of government

Disappointingly, the Palaszczuk Government has cut millions of dollars from programs that protect some of Queensland's most vulnerable protected areas. Since being elected, the Labor Government has reduced funding for the purchase of new protected areas by over 65 per cent.

In Government, the Liberal National Party spent an average of \$20 million per year on Queensland's protected areas, including key koala habitat areas.

Two years ago, the Queensland Auditor General released a scathing report finding that the State Government had systemically failed the state's growing list of threatened species and was falling well short of achieving stated conservation goals.

Earlier this year the LNP revealed under a question on notice that the Palaszczuk Government has added just 0.7% of extra protected areas, despite their 17% commitment to the United Nations by 2020. Sadly, instead of acting upon the Auditor General's report, Labor cut even more funding by slashing millions from protected area acquisitions again in last year's budget.

The LNP is committed to delivering practical outcomes that protect Queensland's natural environment, expand protected areas and support local jobs. We will be announcing a plan for this during the campaign.

Great Barrier Reef, Marine Protection & Healthy Rivers

The LNP has a long and proud history of protecting the Great Barrier Reef. It was the LNP that banned oil and gas operations on the Great Barrier Reef. Under the LNP, the Reef was established as the world's largest marine park and achieved World Heritage listing. The LNP set new international standards in marine conservation by expanding the marine park's 'no-take' sanctuary areas by over sixfold.

The previous LNP Government stopped Labor's plan to dump tens of millions of tonnes of dredge spoil on the reef and restricted capital dredging in the marine park area to land disposal. An incoming LNP Government will work with the agricultural sector and environmental groups to develop new environmental reef standards which will be enshrined in legislation.

The principles of this approach will be:

- Improving water quality standards to protect the Great Barrier Reef;
- Protecting and securing our valuable agricultural sector;
- Legislated minimum standards;
- Respecting property rights; and
- Incentives to encourage best practice.

If elected, a future LNP Government will form a partnership with all stakeholders to build sustainable agricultural industries and protect Queensland's greatest natural asset, the Great Barrier Reef. An LNP Government will also introduce a voluntary fishing license buyback scheme, implement a ReefSafe labelling policy for seafood sustainably sourced from the Great Barrier Reef and deliver three new artificial reefs to support recreational fishers.

Creating a stronger, more sustainable fishing industry is part of the LNP's plan to stimulate the economy and create a decade of secure jobs. Our plan to introduce a voluntary license buyback scheme will protect local marine life while creating more secure jobs for commercial fishers.

The voluntary buyback scheme will target licenses in the Cape and provide an important structural adjustment to the industry, while protecting dugongs, marine turtles and other local marine life. Less nets in the water means less pressure on fish stocks, but it also means more long-term jobs.

Declining marine water quality from land-based run-off is one of key concerns to the long-term health and resilience of the reef identified by the Great Barrier Marine Park Authority. Run-off sediments block the light needed to keep seagrasses and coral alive and healthy. Nutrients contained within run-off have also been shown to contribute to algal blooms and outbreaks of coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish.

Water capture, storage and diversion can significantly limit land-based run-off from entering the marine park ecosystem and damaging the Great Barrier Reef. The 2017 Great Barrier Reef Scientific Consensus Statement estimated the construction of the Burdekin Dam has reduced the total suspended sediment load by approximately 35 per cent from the Burdekin River compared to pre-dam conditions.

The LNP's New Bradfield Scheme will significantly reduce the run-off from some of the largest reef catchment river systems by capturing and storing water out of the South Johnstone, Tully, Herbert and

Burdekin rivers. Captured water from the four river systems would flow into Queensland's largest dam and then redirected west of the Great Dividing Range reducing the run-off from the reef catchment area.

The New Bradfield Scheme would capture North Queensland's water and use it to create new jobs, improve climate resilience and secure the futures of rural communities. It will also generate significant power supplies through hydro electricity. The LNP is committed to investing in new water security projects across Queensland to drought-proof regional communities and improves Queensland's climate resilience.

The LNP shares the Queensland Conservation Council's views about the Channel Country being a special part of Queensland. The environmental values of the area are important, as are the future of the people who live there and the communities, they live in.

In contrast to Labor's half-baked Christmas eve proposed changes to Channel Country area protection, the previous LNP Government consulted through the Western Rivers Advisory Panel, which included local government, agriculture, natural resource management, indigenous, environmental, resources and scientific representatives.

This group assisted in developing strategies that found an effective balance between river system protection and sustainable development opportunities in far western Queensland. As a result, the LNP put in place a management framework that:

- Ruled out increasing water entitlements that would allow cotton to be grown on Cooper Creek, by capping water entitlements for irrigation.
- Banned open cut mining in the Channel Country and subjected petroleum and gas development to enhanced environmental regulations.
- Created a special Channel Country Protection Area, which covered a greater area than Labor's previous Wild Rivers legislation.

In particular, any proposed petroleum and gas development in the Channel Country were subject to strict controls, under strengthened conditions contained in the Environmental Protection Act - stronger than any other part of Queensland. The LNP created a plan to strike a balance between the protection of the environment and creating local jobs.

Mining & Pollution

Effective rehabilitation of resource industry extraction activities is a major concern raised by many agricultural landholders. Labor's failure to enforce rehabilitation standards on behalf of landholders has led to industry groups AgForce and Queensland Farmers Federation calling for greater regulatory power to enforce compliance requirements.

In partnership with the agricultural sector, the LNP supported greater enforcement of mining rehabilitation standards. The Palaszczuk Government has allowed a small number of negligent mining companies to leave farmers to pick up the bill for rehabilitation costs and abandoned voids.

Sustainable Cities & Planning Laws

Labor has taken control of planning and development decisions away from locals. Only the LNP has a plan for responsible and affordable growth. We need to protect our suburban streets and ensure our children have parks to play in.

We need to plan and build infrastructure to support new areas for development, as the development occurs not after. Locals need to have the ability to have their say through the planning process as it's their community.

The LNP is passionate about keeping green space available in Queensland because it helps families live a healthy lifestyle and protects animal habitats. We must do everything to protect green space for generations to come and only the LNP is committed to doing that.

The LNP supports keeping green space for the community and if elected we will work in partnership with local governments to enhance and expand green space across metropolitan areas in Queensland.

Most Queenslanders are concerned about protecting green space in our cities and the LNP believes access to clean water, fresh air and natural habitat is a top priority.

The LNP will support more opportunities for resource recovery, recycling and mitigating landfill challenges. In line with our commitment, no immediate changes are planned for the current scheme. However, we note the Federal Government's waste export ban (with some provisions commencing as early as January 2021) will transform Queensland's waste industries.

It will be essential for the State Government and Local Governments to partner with the waste industry to ensure Queensland is ready for when these export bans are implemented. The LNP understand the need to expand opportunities for resource recovery going forward.

The LNP believe there are many opportunities for a new Queensland Government to work closer with local government and industry to achieve better outcomes with respect to waste management.

Climate Change & Energy

The LNP believes in a responsible approach to climate change that protects the environment and doesn't cost Queensland jobs.

We have announced a plan to protect the environment by:

- Delivering a plan to build Queensland's largest hydro-electric project in the state, the New Bradfield Scheme, which would generate enough green hydroelectricity to power up to 800,000 homes and transform our regional economies, store carbon while limiting nutrient runoff into the Great Barrier Reef;
- Mandating investment in renewable energy by government owned energy companies;
- Exploring for more minerals so Queensland can benefit in more green jobs in batteries, electric vehicles and solar panels; and
- Ensuring Queensland supports the national target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the Paris agreement.

The LNP will work with the private sector, energy market institutions, households and businesses to build a sustainable energy future. To increase the amount of renewable energy, the LNP will fast-track approvals for major projects, including renewable energy projects to reduce power bills and create more green jobs.

In terms of improving grid security, with one of the longest grids in the world there is real potential for edge of grid opportunities such as battery storage and microgrids. We view Renewable Energy Zones for key areas as offering an excellent opportunity to couple new, cheap, clean energy with existing energy intensive industries to enhance their long-term viability and attract new businesses into regional areas. In this regard, we are closely monitoring the trial in New South Wales.

The LNP has a policy framework to position Queensland for the global shifts in energy that are taking place and we will ensure the state does not miss out on new opportunities and jobs. We thank the Queensland Conservation Council for their advocacy for renewable energy and look forward to working with you in the future.

Conclusion

The LNP is the only party that has a plan to create a stronger economy and more secure jobs. The LNP's economic plan will create a decade of secure jobs to get Queensland working again.

We intend to make a major environmental commitment in the lead-up to the election on 31 October and will update you further as these are announced.

While the Palaszczuk Labor Government has cancelled this year's budget, making spending commitments more challenging, the LNP has already said we would deliver a full state budget within the first 100 days of forming government.

This will deliver environmental legacy projects for generations to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David' followed by a stylized surname.

David Crisafulli MP
Member for Broadwater