



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Environment

SPEECH

Wednesday, 25 March 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Speaker Christensen, George, MP	Question No.

Mr CHRISTENSEN (Dawson—The Nationals Deputy Whip) (09:52): On Saturday, I stood with the Prime Minister, the Hon. Tony Abbott, with the environment minister, and with Queensland's minister for the Great Barrier Reef, Steven Miles, on Hamilton Island in my electorate to launch the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan. The Reef 2050 plan is a blueprint for the management and protection of the reef over the next 35 years. It is a blueprint based on years of scientific research and analysis, because our Great Barrier Reef is the best researched World Heritage area on earth. It is also a blueprint detailing actions taken and actions to be taken that will ensure the health of the Great Barrier Reef and ensure that the reef is not listed as 'in danger' by the World Heritage Committee.

Despite the great work which is being done to map out a plan for protecting the Great Barrier Reef, there is a band of extreme greens who still want to complain. They belong to groups such as Greenpeace, the Australian Marine Conservation Society, Friends of the Earth, Get Up, and the Environmental Defenders Office. Although their names spruik concepts such as conservation, they are really about destruction, because they want to destroy our way of life and our biggest industry.

These extreme greens complained about the disposal of dredge spoil in reef waters, and the Reef 2050 plan spells out now that there are no major projects proposing to dump capital dredge spoil in the reef World Heritage area. In fact, that practice is now being banned altogether. The extreme greens complained that the government was not investing enough money in the reef. Well, on Saturday, the Prime Minister announced that a further \$100 million would be invested into the Reef Trust which will fund activities that improve water quality in the Great Barrier Reef.

The extreme greens complained that there was going to be dredge spoil dumped in the Caley Valley wetlands. Well, the Reef 2050 plan now spells out that there are no plans to dump capital dredge spoil on the Caley Valley wetlands or any dredge spoil on the Caley Valley wetlands.

Despite having got what they want, and despite the Reef 2050 plan being an exemplary document showing the way forward for the reef and the best chance that the reef has had in a long time, these extreme greens act like Wormtongue from *The Lord of the Rings*, flying overseas and whispering in the ears of the decision-makers and diplomats who have anything to do with UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee, poisoning their minds on the state of the reef. What treachery, to go against the interests of your own nation and your own people for no sound reason at all!

That is treason, and these people are nothing more than the eco traitors. What these eco traitors really want to do is to shut down the coal industry completely, and they do not care if it takes a World Heritage Committee label of 'in danger' to do it. They do not care about what that would mean for communities in my electorate and the country as a whole. They do not care that it would do enormous damage to the brand of the reef, which allows this country to reap millions of tourism dollars, or that it would threaten major investments. The eco traitors are holding the reef to ransom. The eco traitors are holding industry to ransom. The eco traitors are holding jobs to ransom. If they have their way and the reef is listed as 'in danger', it will have devastating effects on industries other than mining that sustain my electorate, such as tourism and farming, and the jobs those industries create. If these eco traitors want to show that they really do care, they will support— (*Time expired*)