



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

CRIPPS SUPPORTS CATCHMENT GROUP RESPONSE TO MORATORIUM

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has endorsed the proposal to form catchment based, stakeholder groups across the Wet Tropics region to co-ordinate a community response to the water resources moratorium imposed by the Bligh Labor Government.

Mr Cripps said the sudden announcement by Natural Resources Minister, Stephen Robertson, had caught stakeholder groups in the Wet Topics off guard, but it was important to regroup quickly and organise a response with a view to challenging the State Government on the science being used and the implementation process involved.

“It is clear that the moratorium is a precursor to the development of a water resource plan for the Wet Tropics region. Water resource plans are not new, but it would be very unusual for the State Government to implement a single plan for the whole of the Wet Tropics region, as water resource plans are usually based on a single catchment” said Mr Cripps.

“There are six catchment areas affected by the moratorium, including the catchments of the Herbert, Tully/Murray, Johnstone, Russell, Mulgrave and Mosman/Port Douglas areas. As I said last week, it’s a massive area to throw under one blanket rule. We will need to test DERM’s science and fight to achieve some transparency through that process” he said.

Mr Cripps said he understood efforts were underway for catchment based groups to be established across the Wet Tropics region, with local community based natural resource management group, Terrain NRM, acting in a co-ordinating role, which will include representatives from rural industry, local government and other stakeholders.

“It is totally inappropriate and unreasonable for the Bligh Labor Government to think that it will be able to get away with doing a cheap and nasty water resource plan for the entire Wet Tropics region and not consult with important stakeholder groups in each individual catchment area. That would be unprofessional and invalid scientifically” said Mr Cripps.

“Minister Robertson and DERM should be doing individual water resource plans in each catchment. If they intend to throw all the catchments in together under a single plan for the Wet Tropics region, it just goes to show how lazy and incompetent the Bligh Labor Government is in respect of issues concerning regional and rural Queensland” he said.

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