



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

LABOR ALL TALK BUT NO ACTION ON NATIONAL PARKS

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has condemned the Bligh Government for being all talk and no action on the management of Queensland's extensive National Park estate and repeated his charge that Labor was more interested in political spin than conservation.

Mr Cripps said a recent report by the Queensland Auditor – General had revealed that just 98 of the 576 (17 per cent) National Parks in Queensland had a management plan in place, despite each park requiring a plan to be developed under the *Nature Conservation Act*.

“This independent report is a damning indictment of the Bligh Labor Government. Labor Environment Ministers swan around the state, basking in the publicity of new national park declarations, but the Bligh Government has absolutely no commitment to managing new or existing parks properly to actually protect their conservation values” said Mr Cripps.

“It is simply not good enough to declare an area as a National Park, assume that action will protect the conservation values within the declared area and walk away from it. That is what the Bligh Labor Government is doing in Queensland and it is a disgrace. The Auditor – General’s report has confirmed that there is no proper planning being done” he said.

Mr Cripps, who has for a number of years campaigned for more resources to address “bread and butter” environmental issues in North Queensland National Parks, such as the spread of pest weeds and increasing numbers of feral pigs, said the Auditor – General’s report was a welcome confirmation that the issues he had been raising were legitimate and accurate.

“About two thirds of my electorate is covered by world heritage, national park or state forest, so I am keenly aware of the lack of resources provided by the Bligh Labor Government to the QPWS to maintain the conservation values of existing protected areas” said Mr Cripps.

“In his report, the Auditor-General clearly states that without approved park management plans, conservation activities undertaken in the protected area estate may be insufficient and that the relatively small number of completed park management plans reduces the department’s capacity to measure its success and accurately report its findings” he said.

Mr Cripps said the Auditor – General had politely exposed the fact that the management of Queensland’s National Parks by the Bligh Labor Government was an unfortunate joke.

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