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MEDIA RELEASE

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Vote encourages 'panic' tree-clearing in Queensland

Panic and even illegal tree clearing may be the result of the Queensland Parliament's delaying of an ALP Bill to limit tree-clearing throughout the State, according to North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC) Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

The Bill conformed with the ALP's pre-election promise to overturn the Newman governments devastating tree-clearing laws. However, the progress of the Bill was stymied in the Queensland House last night by the last-minute and inexplicable about-face of Rob Pyne MP (former government now Independent member for Cairns). After assuring numerous constituents and stakeholders that he would support the ALP on this issue, Mr Pyne voted with the LNP and the Katter Party to slow its passage. The previous LNP legislation has seen a significant increase in tree-clearing through the State.

'There are two issues here', said Ms Tubman.

'The first is that an elected politician seems to have intentionally misled his constituents and stakeholders. As people become increasingly disillusioned by the behaviour of some elected representatives, such abuse of trust simply embeds cynicism in the electorate.

'The second issue is, of course, the impact of tree-clearing on climate change and the quality of water running into the very seriously compromised Great Barrier Reef.

'Until such time as politicians of all persuasions realise that addressing climate change involves changing the way we do things – including decreasing tree-clearing, and shifting from coal to renewables – their posturing on caring for the Reef, the environment and future generations is simply 'hot air'.

'NQCC commends the ALP attempts to finally move on this vital issue, calling on them to ensure that the necessary changes to tree-clearing laws are made as soon as possible.

'It also calls on the farming community to accept that tree-clearing will only exacerbate climate change, to the detriment of the agriculture and grazing sectors.'

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