

GOATS — GRAZING IMPACT

1061. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Environment:

My question is the missing question from yesterday. I refer to the environmental impact of grazing by goats in Western Australia.

- (1) Is excessive grazing considered clearing?
- (2) If yes to (1), what is being done to —
 - (a) monitor the impact of goats on pastoral leases; and
 - (b) prevent clearing of native vegetation by goats?
- (3) What is the impact of grazing by goats in WA?
- (4) Is this impact increased by the practice of, in effect, the farming of feral goats?
- (5) If no to (4), why not?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Yes. However, an exemption from the requirement for a clearing permit exists under schedule 6 of the Environmental Protection Act 1986 to allow a pastoral lessee to graze stock on a pastoral lease in accordance with the Land Administration Act 1997, the terms and conditions of the pastoral lease and any relevant condition or determination by the Pastoral Lands Board. An exemption also exists under the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004. This is for areas outside areas declared environmentally sensitive for clearing to maintain land that has been previously lawfully cleared within the past 10 years for use as pasture. This exemption does not allow for greater areas of clearing or grazing, or more intensive clearing or grazing. Grazing beyond the scope of these exemptions requires a clearing permit.
- (2)
 - (a) Management of pastoral leases is subject to conditions established under the Land Administration Act 1997 and is administered through the Pastoral Lands Board. Rangeland monitoring advice to the Pastoral Lands Board is provided through the Department of Agriculture and Food. This includes a resource evaluation system called the Western Australian rangeland monitoring system.
 - (b) On lands managed by the Department of Environment and Conservation there are active goat control programs using a combination of shooting, trapping and closing of artificial water supplies.
- (3) Grazing by goats can be managed in a sustainable way. Where goats are not sustainably managed, they impact on biodiversity values as well as impacting on soil structure and surface hydrology.
- (4) Farming of goats on pastoral leases is managed under the Land Administration Act 1997, which is administered by the Minister for Lands. Agricultural management of feral goats is the responsibility of the Minister for Agriculture and Food pursuant to the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007.
- (5) See the answer to (4).