

NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

485. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the historic announcement this morning that the McGowan Labor government will end the commercial logging of Western Australia's native forests by 2024. Can the minister outline to the house what this landmark policy will mean for the environment and Western Australia's efforts in responding to climate change?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for her question. I am very pleased and proud to be part of a Labor government that is ending the large-scale logging and clearing of native forest. This builds on the work that was started nearly 20 years ago by the Gallop government by ending the logging of old-growth forest. We are moving in a very considered and careful way to look at how we can be more sustainable and manage our forests in a more sustainable way. I was in Mundaring this morning with the Minister for Forestry and the Premier to make this historic announcement. This is a fundamental shift in how we manage and view our forests. It is a shift away from clearing and deforestation, which is a significant contributor to climate change. The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report clearly outlined that deforestation and clearing was a contributor to climate change and that one of the best things we can do to halt climate change is to stop deforestation, and that is what we will do. All large-scale native logging will be stopped.

We will move very quickly to secure the two-tier karri forests into national park and look at how we can bring other areas of the state forest into either a national park or a conservation reserve to protect them for future industries. This is about shifting from an unsustainable economic activity in the timber industry to a more sustainable timber industry, which is the softwood industry. That is the future of the timber industry, and the state government is protecting those jobs.

This is a really, really important announcement for our state. Many people have fought for this for a number of years. It will preserve the incredible biodiversity and natural environment that we have in the south west for future generations to come. It will also support emerging industries like tourism and beekeeping that are much more sympathetic with biodiversity and the natural environment. I am very proud to be part of this government, which has moved to secure our south west forests. Essentially, it will mean that two million hectares of the south west forest out of the 2.5 million hectares will be protected from logging. This is an incredible outcome for our state.