

CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 1999

Reconsideration in Detail

On motion by Mrs Edwardes (Minister for the Environment), resolved -

That clause 10, as amended, be reconsidered.

Clause 10: Part III Divisions 1, 2 and 3 replaced by Division 1 -

Mrs EDWARDES: This follows on from debate in the House last week on this Bill in which the member for Maylands proposed two amendments that the Government indicated it would accept. The amendments concerned the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management, and were linked to another section of the Bill whereby when advising the minister on sustainable forest management, the Conservation Commission needed to do so on ecologically sustainable management principles. I indicated that we would agree to the amendments. However, parliamentary counsel advises that the amendments should be made only to clause 10 rather than clauses 4 and 10. I move -

Page 9, lines 20 and 21 - To delete "ecologically sustainable" and substitute "principles of ecologically sustainable forest management to be applied in the".

Page 10, after line 5 - To insert the following -

(2) In subsection (1)(h)

"principles of ecologically sustainable forest management"

means the principles that -

- (a) the decision-making process should effectively integrate both long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations;
- (b) if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, the lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation;
- (c) the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations;
- (d) the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration in decision-making; and
- (e) improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms should be promoted.

We support the amendments which were first moved by the member for Maylands, but with one alteration: In proposed subsection (2)(c) the words that previously referred to the principle of intergenerational equity have been removed for the purposes of the better drafting of the principles. It does not derogate from the intent of the amendment of the member for Maylands. I indicated that we would not accept the amendment to remove the reference to "sustained yield basis" from proposed section 19(1)(h)(i). However, I said last week that I would look at that in the light of the insertion of the principles of ESFM. The reason for that is that we need now to put into practice the definition of sustained yield, which is contained in the Regional Forest Agreement. Sustained yield means the yield that a forest can produce continuously at a given intensity of management. Sustained yield management implies continuous production planned so as to achieve, at the earliest practical time, a balance between increment and cutting with a suite of sustainable use objectives. It is important that proposed new section 19(1)(h)(i) remain as it is because the public, which includes the conservation movement and industry, is most interested to know that ESFM principles have been applied and we have incorporated into the Bill how much forest can be harvested to provide a sustained yield of forest products. It is not appropriate therefore to change that definition, but more appropriate to use the term sustained yield, which would apply the definition of sustained yield contained in the Regional Forest Agreement.

I again thank members opposite for their participation in the debate. I acknowledge again that these amendments were put forward by the member for Maylands, and I thank her for that contribution.

Dr EDWARDS: We are pleased to support these amendments because we introduced what were effectively the same amendments last week. We are also quite happy with the changes that the minister has made to proposed subsection (2)(c). As she said, the intent is still there and the wording is improved, given the change to the heading.

The principles of ecologically sustainable forest management are extremely important in this Bill. The Bill sets out the role of the Conservation Commission and it heralds a change in the future management of both the

conservation estate and the forest estate. It is very important that this principle of ESFM be incorporated in the Bill. The principle is talked about a lot but to have it formally in the Bill as a definition is an advance. We thank the minister for considering the matter, redrafting the Bill and incorporating the principle into the body of the Bill.

Amendments put and passed.

Clause, as further amended, put and passed.