

LAND FOR WILDLIFE

Statement by Minister for the Environment

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for the Environment) [2.04 pm]: I inform the house of a milestone for a community-based conservation program that is making a significant contribution to protecting Western Australia's biodiversity. Land for Wildlife is a voluntary nature conservation program that supports landowners and community groups to maintain and enhance native vegetation and fauna on private property and community-owned land. I am pleased to inform the house that recently Land for Wildlife celebrated its tenth anniversary. The program operates as a type of club in which participants are volunteers who can share their experiences and information while operating viable farms or other business ventures on the remainder of their properties. All members receive an initial management plan for the nominated Land for Wildlife site on their property that provides them with a blueprint for habitat management.

In its first year, just over 80 landowners joined the scheme. The combined area of remnant vegetation on their land was just under 18 800 hectares, of which just over 10 000 hectares were managed under Land for Wildlife. Today there are nearly 1 600 landowners registered under Land for Wildlife. Their properties contain around 250 000 hectares managed as Land for Wildlife sites. That is the equivalent of more than 600 Kings Parks being managed on private land for biodiversity conservation in Western Australia. Ninety-nine of these properties also contain populations of rare or threatened flora and fauna or threatened ecological communities. Eighty of the landowners have registered conservation covenants on their properties and several of them have won awards for land management, bush care or ecotourism.

I want to acknowledge the 1 600 landowners and community groups who have become heavily involved in Land for Wildlife and helped to make it the success that it is. I would also like to acknowledge the enthusiasm and dedication of the entire Department of Environment and Conservation's Land for Wildlife team, led by Penny Hussey, who is well known to many farmers throughout the state and has led the initiative since its early planning and development right through to today.

There is no doubt that with the current greater emphasis on whole-of-community involvement in natural resource management, Land for Wildlife will continue to be a leading player in conserving our biodiversity by bringing practical, useable information to an increasing number of landholders who wish to manage their land with wildlife in mind. I table a copy of "With Wildlife in Mind - Ten years of *Land for Wildlife* in Western Australia".

[See paper 2710.]