

HAMELIN POOL STROMATOLITES

**943. Ms M. BEARD to the Minister for Environment:**

Sorry, minister. Congratulations. I am sorry that you are not the last.

I refer to previous questions about the closure of the world-famous Hamelin Pool stromatolites and the urgent need for remediation of the boardwalk and associated impacts on both the stromatolites and tourism in the Gascoyne region.

- (1) Has the minister received advice or direction from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization about the impacts that the ongoing closure will have on the site's UNESCO World Heritage status?
- (2) Has a business case been completed for the replacement of the boardwalk?
- (3) Given the significant importance of the site, will temporary remediation measures be taken to protect the stromatolites and when will this occur?

**Mr R.R. WHITBY replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) As the member knows, there were dual issues facing the infrastructure in that particular part of the world. We had an ageing boardwalk that needed work and then we had cyclone Seroja, which caused extensive damage to the structure. A report was forwarded to us that suggested that we could embark on some remediation but the life span of that work would be limited. Indeed, rather than fix up some part of it and come back later on and make further improvements, it was more advisable to consider a whole approach to the structure and to make a replacement rather than a repair as the effort that we made there. As the member can imagine, we have a very good Minister for Tourism these days whom I have made representations to about the requirements to improve that facility. I am very hopeful that we will be able to make an announcement soon about funding for the future of that facility.