

SANDALWOOD HARVEST

499. Hon COLIN HOLT to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to sandalwood harvesting contracts.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions has issued only a one-year sandalwood harvesting licence to the Forest Products Commission; and, if not, what is the correct licence time frame?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that the harvesting of sandalwood by native title holders is now considered part of the 90 per cent crown land allocation?
- (3) How will the government balance the needs of the developing Aboriginal sandalwood companies with those of the Forest Products Commission?
- (4) What concerns does the minister have if the Forest Products Commission applies for and is granted a three-year or longer harvesting licence, leaving other sandalwood harvesting licence holders with limited access to sandalwood, potentially putting Aboriginal businesses at risk?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions has not issued a licence to the Forest Products Commission. The department of has issued one-year licences to Forest Products Commission contractors. These are set to expire on 30 June 2019.
- (2) This matter is under consideration. The department is working with stakeholders, including the Forest Products Commission and Aboriginal groups, on the allocation of the sandalwood resource to ensure a sustainable sandalwood industry.
- (3)–(4) These questions should be directed to the Minister for Forestry.