

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

891. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Environment:

I ask a supplementary question. Why is the minister not listening to the vast majority of farmers, who do not want to see any more land degradation?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Treasurer, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Why is the minister, as environment minister, putting in jeopardy vast areas of this state? The clearing of at least 18 000 hectares of land a year is what the minister is about to allow.

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

As I said, this was clearly an election commitment that the government put out. This commitment was incredibly welcomed by the Pastoralists and Graziers' Association.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Nobody can hear on either side.

Mr A.P. JACOB: It is also a commitment that was made specifically to the farmers in Esperance when the former Minister for Environment was down there. I think it will be strongly welcomed across the length and breadth of regional Western Australia by the very people who have for generations been managing their own farmland.