

SANDALWOOD HARVEST

**157. Hon COLIN HOLT to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to this year's decision by the Department of Biosecurity, Conservation and Attractions to categorise native title as private land for the purpose of sandalwood harvest licences in 2019–20.

- (1) Why has the DBCA categorised native title that exists on crown land as private land for the purpose of sandalwood harvesting licences, essentially restricting the rights of native title holders to harvest sandalwood for commercial purposes?
- (2) Does the minister agree with this categorisation?
- (3) Is the minister aware that harvesters from Kutkabubba Aboriginal Corporation are being disadvantaged by competing for uncommitted amounts within the 10 per cent private land allocation and therefore compromising it as a local business providing commercial and employment opportunities for a remote Aboriginal community?
- (4) If the minister is aware, has he discussed the issue with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs?
- (5) If the minister is not aware, will he confer with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to help resolve this issue?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

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

- (1) Crown land over which native title has been determined has not been classified as private land for the purposes of sandalwood harvesting.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The McGowan government supports and promotes Aboriginal participation in a range of activities and industries. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions is actively working with Kutkabubba Aboriginal Corporation so that it can sustainably harvest sandalwood in relevant areas. I am also advised the Kutkabubba Aboriginal community wrote to a number of ministers in March 2018 acknowledging that DBCA had committed to sorting out a short-term solution while in parallel trying to finalise a longer-term sustainable approach.
- (4)–(5) I am seeking advice from DBCA on sandalwood management options. I can then liaise with other relevant ministers on this matter.