

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**  
**THURSDAY 02<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2015**  
**NEW ZEALAND FUR SEALS**

**Mr PEDERICK ( Hammond ) ( 12:55 ):** I move:

That this house calls on the state government to immediately prepare and implement an Over-Abundant Native Species Management Plan , noting the effects caused by the rapidly increasing population of New Zealand fur seals on South Australian marine life, the environment and the fishing industry, and the provision for a plan for the sustainable harvest of the seals.

This is something I do not do lightly. This is something that I brought to this house three years ago. This motion has been reinforced by my local paper today in *The Murray Valley Standard* where several things are reported, including a so-called factsheet from the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) that has been pulled off the website because so many people in my electorate were telling them about the untruths that were in that factsheet. It only came out because I posted my petition regarding this matter on my website and my Facebook page which currently, as far as I know, has at least 500 signatures coming to my office, and there are many more getting collected around the electorate and in a broader manner.

We have much support across the electorate. In fact, Darryl Sumner, an Aboriginal elder from the Ngarrindjeri, has voiced how they hate these things. They have not been part of Coorong life in the ancient history or in the recent history, and the Ngarrindjeri are right on board. Darryl has called for the government to implement a cull—and they are his words. He has called for direct action. Apart from that we have the environmental damage that these seals are causing. They are invading the northern lagoon of the Coorong. They are heading to the southern lagoon where the rookeries of the native birds are like the vulnerable fairy tern and other birds and they will

be at significant risk. People are already noticing fewer number of pelicans around the Coorong.

These seals keep doing more damage as they invade both Lake Albert and Lake Alexandrina, and the Coorong, and they are basically killing off the Coorong and Lakes fishery. The total population of these seals is over 100,000 and they can consume in three days the total allowable catch for the Lakes and Coorong fishery. It is outrageous to think that we have these fisheries that are so well managed—and at world status they are number one—that we have this threat. They tear into nets, they cut fish in half just for fun because they can. I know of one worker who mutually agreed with his employer only this morning to leave his employ because he cannot make enough money. I will say his name—young Tyson Bradley. He was one who brought this issue to light and raised it again recently. He is dismayed that he does not have a future in the fishing industry at this stage.

In the short moments I have left, I want to talk about the impact on recreational boating. The speed ski titles at Murray Bridge had to be called off on 5 June because a New Zealand fur seal was accidentally hit by a boat, and it was a great tragedy. That fur seal was put down. I do not even know if the boat had hit that. I also warn the state government because of their inaction: what happens if these fur seals keep invading further north of Murray Bridge—I know they are heading towards Mannum—and put a whole \$500 million per annum boating, fishing and recreational industry at risk? It is madness, something needs to be done. The government condones culling feral goats, feral donkeys, feral dogs, feral camels, they also condone kangaroo culls, so what is going on? There needs to be some positive action.

There is talk of pingers, there is talk of waterproof firecrackers. Well, use them. However, already the marine scale fishers will tell you that after a couple of months the pingers start attracting the seals. Action needs to be taken. These seals are devastating the environment and the fishing industry. There is talk of the fishing industry losing its accreditation if a sustainable harvest is put in place. At the end of the day, there

will not be a fishing industry. People in the industry fear their jobs will be gone within six months. I fear for my community. I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.

*Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.*