



The Hon Mark Furner MP  
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries

Our ref: CTS 07986/18

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Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliamentary Services  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

Thank you for your letter of 8 March 2018 concerning petition number 2873-18, received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly, about the removal of commercial netting from the Burrum River.

I note the petitioners' concerns about commercial netting in Queensland.

The Palaszczuk Government released the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017- 2027 in June last year, which sets out the reform agenda for the next 10 years. More information regarding the strategy can be found on the department's website at <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/fisheries/sustainable-fisheries-strategy>.

The strategy is the outcome of a significant consultation exercise conducted in 2016 with the overwhelming message that all stakeholders wanted reform in the way we manage fisheries.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is now going through the process of implementing the strategy, which includes reviewing the priority fisheries of trawl, east coast inshore and crab. Working groups have been set up to discuss some of the key issues and reform options. Working group members comprise a range of commercial and recreational fishers, conservation groups and are not decision making bodies, rather they are there to provide advice.

While there have been some initial discussions on reform options for the priority fisheries, no decisions have been made at this time. Further consultation will be held with all stakeholders in the coming months and we are keen to get ideas and feedback from all stakeholders during this process.

Being a member of a working group is not the only way to get involved. One of the actions in the strategy is to utilise more novel engagement techniques, including online surveys to gather a range of feedback on particular fishery issues.

The department will be releasing a series of discussion papers in late March 2018 and holding regional face to face meetings throughout Queensland in April and May 2018 to gather feedback on proposed reform options and talk about how we can better manage our fisheries. The proposed discussion paper on the reform of the East Coast Inshore Fishery will be of particular interest to the petitioners.

Both Queensland's commercial and recreational fishing sectors contribute economic and social value to the state. Access to fisheries resources is complex and the strategy recognises that there needs to be a transparent approach with clear reasons for decisions to reallocate from one sector to another. A key action is to develop a reallocation policy to guide this process and consider all stakeholder input to ensure economic, social and cultural values are maximised. I expect that the reallocation policy will be finalised in the near future and will provide a clear and repeatable process for these types of requests.

I trust this information is of assistance. I would also encourage the petitioners to check online and via Facebook for opportunities to have a say and for the release of the reallocation policy later this year.

Yours sincerely



**MARK FURNER MP**  
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