



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

Our ref: CTS 18586/18
Your ref:

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- 3 JUL 2018

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

Dear Mr Laurie

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Neil'.

Thank you for your letter of 14 June 2018 concerning petition number 2954-18, received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly, regarding fish size and possession limits for recreational fishers.

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

In keeping with the Strategy commitments, Fisheries Queensland released a series of discussion papers in March 2018 that are the first step in reforming our trawl, east coast inshore and crab fisheries. At the same time, a management review discussion paper was released for the coral reef line fishery that is also developing a harvest strategy. These discussion papers have been developed with input from Queensland's new fishery working groups which include stakeholders from commercial, recreational and charter fishing, conservationists and seafood marketers.

While there have been some initial discussions on reform options for the priority fisheries, no decisions on change have been made at this time.

A number of popular recreational species such as bream, flathead, whiting, tailor and dart are managed as part of the east coast inshore fishery. The proposed reforms to this fishery include things like splitting the management of some fisheries into regions, introducing quotas or limits on fishing days, improving fishing gear technology, reviewing fish size and possession limits and having temporary and flexible closures for fishing.

Despite some stakeholder concerns, there is no wholesale reduction to possession limits proposed at this stage, particularly to popular inshore species like bream, whiting and flathead. There is a proposal to reduce the possession limit for mud crab to address black-marketing concerns and introduce a possession limit for blue swimmer crab that doesn't currently have one. There is also a proposal to introduce a general possession limit for those species without any limit at all to ensure ongoing sustainability of our fisheries (this is similar to freshwater where the general possession limit is 20 per species unless otherwise specified).

I have noted petitioners' concerns about reduced possession limits and increased complexity as a result of introducing boat limits or a general possession limit. The feedback from the discussion papers will be considered by the relevant working groups with a package of options also to be considered by the Sustainable Fisheries Expert Panel in July and again in October 2018.

I trust this information is of assistance. I would also encourage the petitioners to check online and via the Fisheries Queensland Facebook page to keep up to date and for further opportunities to have a say.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Furner'.

MARK FURNER MP

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