



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

Our ref: CTS 23714/23  
Your ref: A1185231

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15 December 2023

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
[TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 16 November 2023 regarding petition numbers 3986-23, 3938-23 and 3988-23 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly concerning gillnet fishing.

On 16 November 2023, I announced that commercial fishers will receive generous financial assistance including buy backs, reskilling and financial advice following a policy decision that gillnet fishing in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area will be phased out by mid-2027. Despite the efforts of commercial fishers, gillnet fishing can injure and kill threatened dugongs, turtles, dolphins and protected shark species, significantly impacting world heritage values of the Great Barrier Reef.

The assistance is part of a \$185 million joint Federal Government and Queensland Government package, which adopts all of the recommendations made by the Future Fishing Taskforce. The phasing out of gillnets and transition to more sustainable fishing practices is a key measure to prevent the Great Barrier Reef from being listed as “in danger” by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Stakeholders have had an opportunity to provide submissions to the Future Fishing Taskforce, and industry representatives have also met with the Taskforce. Several professional fishing industry representatives from the east coast provided their direct input and industry expertise. Licence, quota and business owners and leaseholders from Cairns, Townsville, Ayr, Cardwell and the Sunshine Coast and the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) Executive Officer attended the meeting. Senior officials from Fisheries Queensland attended the QSIA Annual General Meeting in Townsville recently to meet with fishers impacted by the proposed changes and continue to engage with the industry at this time of change.

Transition to the new arrangements will commence from 31 December 2023 and affected fishers can now commence the process of applying for structural adjustment assistance.

I trust this information is of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

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

**MARK FURNER MP**

**Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and**

**Minister for Rural Communities**