



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

Our ref: CTS 13976/18  
Your ref:

1 William Street Brisbane 4000  
GPO Box 46 Brisbane  
Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7420  
Email agriculture@ministerial.qld.gov.au

18 MAY 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 2 May 2018 concerning petition number 2899-18, 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.

A priority of the Queensland Government's Sustainable Fisheries Strategy is to develop harvest strategies for these fisheries to ensure they are being managed to best practice standards, giving industry and the community certainty about their future.

In keeping with the Strategy commitments, the Government has developed discussion papers that are the first step in reforming our trawl, east coast inshore and crab fisheries. At the same time, a management review discussion paper has been released for the coral reef line fishery that is also developing a harvest strategy.

The proposed reforms 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.

The 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

The Department held 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 discussion paper on the reform of the East Coast Inshore Fishery will be of particular interest to the petitioners.

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

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.

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 and released in the near future and will provide a clear and repeatable process for these types of requests. Please note that at this stage the Government has no further funding for net free zones.

I trust this information is of assistance. I would also encourage the petitioners to check online and via the Fisheries Queensland Facebook page for opportunities to have a say and for the release of the reallocation policy which will be made available online at: [www.fisheries.qld.gov.au](http://www.fisheries.qld.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**MARK FURNER MP**

**Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries**