



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

Our ref: CTS 03502/24

26 March 2024

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The Honourable Bob Baldwin
Chair
Australian Fishing Trade Association
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Dear Mr Baldwin

Thank you for your letter of 4 December 2023 regarding the planned removal of the netting exemption in the Great Sandy Marine Park. I apologise for the delay in responding.

The Miles Government places a high value on the importance of recreational and charter fishing in Queensland. We are in the process of delivering some of the biggest reforms to commercial net fishing on the east coast and in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Other initiatives, such as Fish Aggregation Devices, the Fish 'n SIPS tagged fish program and the Women in Recreational Fishing Network further highlight our commitment to growing recreational fishing in Queensland. I appreciate your support for these actions.

Our State's fisheries resources are important to all Queenslanders. Fisheries Queensland is committed to a sustainable wild-caught seafood industry that provides the quality products that consumers appreciate, while protecting our unique ocean environments. In 2023, the Federal and Queensland Governments announced a package to phase out gillnet fishing in the Great Barrier Reef by mid-2027 and transition to more sustainable fishing practices.

Fisheries Queensland will continue to monitor fishing effort following the implementation of fisheries structural adjustment in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the Great Sandy Marine Park. The Queensland Government will undertake further studies to identify areas of threatened species protection and management. There are no current plans for the Mary River to be closed to gillnetting by commercial operators outside of the Great Sandy Marine Park.

Please also note that the implementation of a new gillnet-free zone would need to be considered under the fisheries resource reallocation policy, which can be found online at: <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/sustainable/management-and-licensing-policies/fisheries-resource-reallocation-policy>.

If you require further information, please contact Mr Dan McIntyre in my office on 07 3719 7420.

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**