



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

Our ref: CTS 19718/23

26/10/2023

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The Honourable Bob Baldwin
Chair
Australian Fishing Trade Association
bobbaldwin@afta.net.au

Dear Mr Baldwin

Thank you for your email of 18 October 2023 regarding concerns with the draft Noosa River Catchment Plan (the draft plan) proposal to establish a Conservation Park in the Noosa River declared Fish Habitat Area (FHA).

The Sunshine Coast and Noosa region is regarded as a fishing mecca, drawing visitors from interstate and overseas. Over the last six years, the Government has worked closely with all stakeholders to implement the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy 2017-2027. Key fish stocks in the region, such as dusky flathead, bream, whiting and dart are considered healthy. Our Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) offshore from Noosa and nearby areas provide additional opportunities for highly sustainable species such as mahi mahi. As you would be aware, the recent national survey showed that in Queensland, recreational fishing by both residents and visitors contributed an estimated \$2.52 billion to the State economy and 23 602 full-time equivalent jobs.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) was contacted by the Noosa Shire Council with a request for input into the draft plan. Fisheries Queensland, within DAF, advised Council that there are existing users of the Noosa River declared FHA, including recreational and commercial fishers, who could be impacted by the establishment of a Conservation Park there. Fisheries Queensland recommended Council undertake additional engagement to clarify the objectives of the proposal and noted that any restriction on existing fishing activities would require substantial consultation and may not be supported.

Legislation for the protection and management of a declared FHA and for the creation of a Conservation Park is under the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Science and within the portfolio responsibilities of the Honourable Ms Leanne Linard MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. I have copied this response to her office for information.

I encourage you to discuss any further concerns you have about the draft plan with the Council in the first instance. Fisheries Queensland intends to remain engaged in the process going forward where required.

If you would like further information, please contact 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**

Cc The Honourable Ms Leanne Linard MP
Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and
Minister for Multicultural Affairs
environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au