

## Attachment 1

Facebook Extract  
Bush 'n Beach Fishing Magazine  
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URGENT ACTION NEEDED!!! Please share and contact your local MP - Regulations have been imposed on recreational fishos but they have not been implemented for the commercial sector, which they were meant to be as well.

CAREFISH has called out for help. Everyone who has interest in fish and therefore fisheries management has an important and urgent part to play if they ever want to see the modernisation of the antiquated government managed system that currently exists.

The way fish are managed in Qld at the moment is a patchwork of regulation going back to Jo Bjelke days which was based on open harvest i.e. everyone can catch as much as they like, the more the better resulting in massive over-allocation of commercial licences. Clearly that had its limits and over the decades there has been a very noticeable decline in many fish stocks.

This has eventually affected entire communities - pretty well all of them now along the Qld coast. Local fishing clubs have closed all over the state and recreational fishing experience, a healthy activity has declined exactly in line with the steady decline in fishing experience.

No fish, no fun. Commercial fishers also felt the pinch of reduced fish stocks and their profits came under increasing pressure (CPUE). And of course, the environment suffered.

This is not a new problem. As long as I can remember there have been the following major attempts by government to resolve and modernise management.

The history of repeated failure of commercial fishery reforms in QLD

1992- 1996 The Burns Inquiry investigated fisheries over several years and made many recommendations. Most weren't enacted so Major FAIL

2007 – 2012 The Inshore Fin Fish Review (ECIFFF) was an extensive Labor initiated inquiry resulting in 2 stages of reforms ie recreational and commercial, the recreational reforms (bag and boat limits to limit harvest) were enacted, the commercial reforms were not. Labor failed to implement them pre election and so did LNP post election, so complete MAJOR LABOR and LNP FAIL again

2012 – 2014 The Gill Net Buy Back was a LNP scheme aimed to buy back 50% of Qld East Coast gill net licences after LNP FAILED to implement the Stage 2 of the previous commercial reforms. This was at the request of commercial, recreational and charter

fishers as well as the environmental sector. About 30% was eventually bought out, so on those terms, partial LNP FAIL

2015 Net Free Zones. In response to the continuing failure to reform fisheries and in particular commercial over harvest, many regions gave up on trying to fix the big problem and lobbied for an exclusion of commercial harvest activity in their own region. There were 11 applications and 3 were successful. These 3 (Cairns, Mackay and Rocky) have proved without any doubt that the removal of commercial effort results in returned fish abundance and social amenity which supports many industries, pleases the community and probably more importantly, the environment. 3 succeeded, 8 failed, you can judge that one yourself. I call it a partial FAIL

2017 – NOW The Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, again a Labor initiative formulated from the 2014 LNP initiated MRAG Independent Expert Review leading to yet another public inquiry - The Green Paper, and progressing to a major public consultation and bureaucratic and expert investment, a very comprehensive and sophisticated effort, with massive public support, and resulting in 102 amendments to the regulations.

Again, the reforms were to be delivered in 2 stages, recreational ie further harvest limits and these were implemented with rec sector support Sept 2019, and commercial – a comprehensive package including vital Harvest Strategies on key species, Quota and Regional Management promised for December 2019 and still NOT IMPLEMENTED. Complete FAIL

So, you can see from this that the commercial reforms repeatedly FAILED or have fallen well short of the mark.

Once again, we are faced with the prospect of an election interrupting the process. Caretaker mode approaches. Once again, the commercial fishers lobby have successfully terrified the government into shelving the process. Labor has made a decision based on political strategy in the lead up to the October election.

We believe that is a VERY BIG MISTAKE, clearly, they have not correctly considered the ramifications of this, like the coming backlash in the massive recreational sector vote, and we can be certain the environmental sector is not too pleased either. Many commercial fishers are progressive and want the reforms too.

And consider this, the completion of the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy is pivotal to how the World Heritage Authority assesses the Great Barrier Reef, which is a World Heritage listed property, the Action is written in concrete in the Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan – BA 23 under Bio-diversity 4.6. Very recently the WHA listing came within a whisker of being down designated to ‘in danger’. This would have considerable repercussion on the reputation of Australia and its ability to manage its iconic property, and its ability to attract tourists.

Also, if a commercial fisher wishes to export wild native fish to the world, as they do in very large quantities, they need to obtain and maintain a WTO (Wildlife Trade Operation) permit which is managed by the Federal Dept of Environment. The Feds

watch very closely to make sure the state conducts these operations sustainably, and they impose conditions, lots of them. The State has wiggled and wiggled and managed to not comply for a very long time, mostly because of all the failures as detailed above. Many fisheries, like prawn, live trout and cray are on their last gasp, a final 12-month extension, and if these reforms fail again, the results may be catastrophic to those sectors and the businesses involved.

So, in a nutshell, the remaining reforms **MUST BE PASSED THROUGH THE LABOR CABINET NOW**. They have been ready to go for a year and were promised by last December at the latest. Many of us have been trying to resolve this quietly and internally without any successes. Many commercial fishers have been doing the same, environmentalists too. Next will be the Science sector.

What's the hold up? Labor has shelved this reform, bowing to a particular antiquated commercial lobby. There are a dozen dinosaurs there who bellow at any suggestion what-so-ever of reform. But there are a million of us and we need to make our voice clear. Governments rely on the apathy of the recreational fishing sector, and we get manipulated because of it.

This is **YOUR** opportunity to tell the government **"WE WILL NOT BE TREATED LIKE THIS"**

#### CALL TO ACTION

Send an email today telling **ALL LABOR MP's** what you want. Copy the list below. And do it again tomorrow and everyday day until this matter is resolved.