



Australian National Sportfishing Association Ltd

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Support for Queensland Net Free Area Proposals

ANSA - Australian National Sportfishing Association backs the Net Free Areas proposal for Queensland that formed part of the Labor Party's policy at the recent election.

ANSA Executive Officer John Burgess said "While there may be some short term readjustment in the commercial sector this needs to be viewed in the longer term where the outcomes are all positive for Queensland communities and the Queensland economy".

"There is an Australia wide move to reallocate inshore finfish resources to the recreational sector as this provides the greatest economic and social return to local communities and will result in more resilient fish stocks".

Mr Burgess commended Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Bill Byrne on his work in taking this policy forward. "We are aware of a strong campaign of opposition by the commercial sector but that is based on emotional arguments and misinformation and does not look to the future"

"One only has to look at the importance of recreational fishing to the Northern Territory economy to see what is possible in Queensland. Most rivers in the Territory are closed to commercial netting and that draws recreational fishers from all around Australia and from overseas".

"Fishing Havens in NSW, Port Phillip Bay and around Perth in Western Australia show that there is national trend and Queensland is now joining that trend".

"While there will be some adjustment to commercial fishers the government has a \$10 million package for the 50 odd licenses that are impacted. That package is considerably more generous than what is available in other industries. We would encourage the government to include funds for retraining of any of the commercial fishers that want to use this as an opportunity to move to another vocation".

"This will not only benefit recreational fishers in Queensland but will also encourage visitors making their annual pilgrimage up the east coast to stay a few more days and take the time to go fishing - this will be a boon for tourism and local economies" Mr Burgess concluded.

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