

Question on Notice

No. 1348

Asked on 25 October 2023

MR N DAMETTO asked the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Australian Government binding Queensland in its commitments to UNESCO, all N2 and N4 fishing licences will be banned from 31 December this year destroying the livelihoods of hundreds of commercial fishers along our east coast. Noting the Future Fisheries Taskforce has completed its enquiry into the implementation of structural adjustments for those impacted fishers—

Will the Minister advise what the Taskforce's recommendations were and when the government is expected to hand down their decision?

ANSWER:

The Future Fishing Taskforce has finished its deliberations and government has accepted its recommendations. On 16 November 2023, the Honourable Leanne Linard MP, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and I confirmed that gillnet fishing will be phased out in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area by mid-2027. The announcement included the details of the significant adjustment package that will be available for impacted fishers.

Of the \$125 million package available, around \$90m will be to financially adjust eligible fishers including buying licence packages, relevant symbols, relevant individual transferable quota (ITQ), nets and their disposal. It will also include funding for boat refits, ex-gratia payments to acknowledge fishers' loss of future income, and also support for seeking independent advice.

Other financial support will include \$1.5m for reskilling and retraining grants and support and \$2.25m to support employees such as deckhands and skippers.

The government will also dedicate \$15m to develop a whole-of-government strategy to accelerate and adopt innovative best-practice sustainable aquaculture in Queensland, and \$4.5m with matching Australian Government funding from the Fisheries Research Development Corporation to support an evidence-based approach to developing and trialling sustainable alternative commercial fishing gear.

Further information is available at <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/business-priorities/fisheries/commercial/future-fishing>.