

Question on Notice

No. 275

Asked on Tuesday, 19 March 2024

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

QUESTION:

With reference to new European Union (EU) deforestation regulations which require importers to the EU to prove cattle products were not produced on land where deforestation occurred after 30 December 2020—

Will the Minister advise if the department assessed the risks to the agricultural sector, particularly those hoping to export cattle to the EU under new free trade agreements, if Queensland is classified as a high risk area for deforestation?

ANSWER:

The Australian Government is leading engagement with the European Union (EU) and Australian exporters around the implementation of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) has had several discussions with industry and Australian Government agencies about the EUDR and has undertaken preliminary desktop work to gather the necessary background on this new regulation.

The EU is a small market representing just 0.68% of Queensland's total beef exports. The EUDR will apply to all beef imported to the EU from 30 December 2024.

The EU is currently working through how the EUDR will be implemented, with several details still outstanding, including the process to determine the risk ratings for countries that export to the EU. The guidelines for how agricultural use is defined under the EUDR are also not yet available. The risk rating will determine the level of compliance that the EU will undertake on imports from that country.

The Queensland Government has instituted initiatives such as the Queensland Low Emissions Agriculture Roadmap 2022-2032, the Land Restoration Fund, the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and the Southeast Queensland Investing in Our Environment for the Future Program 2022-25.

In 2023, the Native Vegetation Scientific Expert Panel found that Queensland's approach to sustainably managing native vegetation was strong. Beef producers in Queensland are already required to comply with this framework.

DAF will continue to engage with industry and the Australian Government as industry prepares to comply with the EUDR.