

# Queensland Seafood Industry Association

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### OPPOSITION PLEDGE ON MORETON BAY FISHING RESTRUCTURE WELCOMED

AN Opposition pledge to spend an extra \$5 million buying out more fishing effort from Moreton Bay has been welcomed by the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA).

QSIA President Neil Green said an important part of the scheme was to help fishing families restructure their businesses properly and leave the industry, if necessary, with dignity.

“The QSIA is strictly non-political,” Mr Green said. “Our interest is in protecting families in the seafood industry and protecting sustainability of fish stocks.

“We welcome the Opposition’s pledge to invest this further money in buying out more fishing effort and helping impacted fishing families adjust to the changes, whether they stay in fishing or leave.

“We would welcome the State Government matching this undertaking in Moreton Bay.”

Mr Green emphasised that he believed the State Government’s environment department, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), had misled the Government.

“The QSIA has said all through this process that the EPA was misleading the State Government and they were going down the wrong track. EPA has repeated all the mistakes of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park rezoning from 2004. EPA just refused to listen.”

Mr Green said a meeting of representatives of Moreton Bay fishermen in Brisbane yesterday was unanimous that the impacts of the Marine Park rezoning on fishing families had not been adequately addressed.

“Fishermen want a proper process put in that considers individual circumstances in Moreton Bay. They were unanimous that a proper restructure package needs to be funded.

“The present buyback scheme from EPA now has taken a lot of cheap fishing licences that weren’t really being used very much.

“At the same time, longtime fishermen who have been badly affected by their traditional local fishing grounds being locked away in green and yellow zones haven’t been bought out.

“That’s why fishermen are saying there needs to be a proper restructure process that takes individual circumstances into account. EPA’s scheme isn’t taking the right fishermen out and the EPA is still trying to do it on the cheap.

“Moreton Bay fishermen believe EPA has got it wrong. Whoever forms government after the State election on March 21, they must revisit the Moreton Bay Marine Park buyback scheme and implement a proper restructure package.”

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