



**The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP**  
**Minister for Primary Industries**  
**Assistant Minister for Tourism and Major Events**

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

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Thursday 14 August 2014

**CONCERNS ADDRESSED ON COMMERCIAL MESH NETTING**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, has announced a ban on commercial netting will remain in place in creeks and waterways where it is not currently permitted.

Ms Hodgkinson said the decision follows recommendations from the Structural Adjustment Review Committee (SARC), which is overseeing the next phase of the Commercial Fisheries Reform Program.

The decision means there will not be any changes, with respect to mesh netting, in the following estuaries: Bournda Lagoon and Sandy Beach Creek; Merimbula Lake; Patonga Creek; Bonville and Pine Creeks; Newports and Boambee Creeks; Jerusalem Creek; Evans River; Mooball Creek; and Cudgen Creek and approves no increase in netting in Pittwater.

Ms Hodgkinson said the decision is in line with advice from the independent SARC.

“From the outset I have maintained the NSW Government is committed to undertaking a genuine and comprehensive consultation process as part of the reform program and that’s exactly what has taken place here,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The NSW Government has listened to feedback and issues raised as part of our comprehensive consultation process.

“During this consultation process, concerns were raised about commercial industry driven proposals in the reform option papers to allow the use of meshing nets in certain estuaries where it is currently not permitted.

“Today’s announcement takes those options off the table.”

Ms Hodgkinson said SARC is reviewing the options and will undertake further targeted consultation with industry, before providing recommendations to the NSW Government.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is committed to getting this reform right, which is why additional time has been provided for the independent SARC to tailor options and undertake further targeted consultation with industry,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“We will also be commissioning an independent economic assessment to assist SARC in making recommendations.

“There is no doubt that reform is a challenging process, but we have a genuine opportunity to strengthen the long-term future of the commercial fishing industry in NSW.

“Labor got the commercial fishing industry into a mess by over-allocating shares in 2007, and bungling a \$1.5 million exit grant process in 2010.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has put a \$16 million structural adjustment package on the table – it is imperative this is put to best use.”