



Reef Regulations and Targets

OBJECTIVE

To ensure the balance between productivity, profitability and stewardship of the natural environment is appropriately struck and to protect growers from unnecessary regulation.

POSITION

The State Government has determined that regulations will be implemented as part of its approach to securing the health of the Reef. Regulations are currently part of the catchment areas in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday's, but not the southern region (Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough).

CANEGROWERS considers that the current reef regulations are not justified. In essence, while we understand the intervention, we disagree with its intent and design. Regulations, if poorly designed or implemented, can be a blunt intervention that stifles innovation and encourages performance at only the lowest common standard. It is also not clear if regulatory intervention is actually performing as designed.

On principle, CANEGROWERS does not believe that a regulatory approach is the best mechanism to achieve a high standard of environment stewardship in a diverse, complex and meteorologically exposed ecosystem.

In contrast, CANEGROWERS believe that Smartcane

BMP is a better approach for growers who are focused on productivity and profitability as well as sustainability. CANEGROWERS does not want to see a situation where regulations negatively influence Smartcane BMP engagement or regulatory standards around things such as record keeping, conflict with industry best practice and developed record procedures and systems. One of the greatest challenges to engagement in the adoption of new farming systems and practices, is conflicting and contradictory advice.

CANEGROWERS supports the Queensland Government policy that accredited Smartcane BMP growers are deemed compliant with reef regulations. This step recognises that growers are demonstrating their environmental stewardship, and incentivises other growers to adopt the program.

ISSUES

- Reef regulations persistently increase production costs with compliance requirements without financial support.
- Grower environmental stewardship efforts go unrecognised in Reef Report cards.
- Consistent pressure to reduce chemical use without consideration of productivity.
- Insufficient scientific evidence to extend reef regulations to the southern regions.
- Regulations are deterring the emergence of innovative farming practices.



Reef Regulations and Targets

ACTIONS

- Remove regulations on farming practices in Great Barrier Reef catchments.
- Base achievable water quality targets for Great Barrier Reef catchments on science.
- Recognise Smartcane BMP as the most enduring way for industry to meet obligations to improve water quality.
- Recognise positive change implemented by industry to reduce environmental footprint.
- Consult industry when refining water quality targets. ■



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Dan Galligan

CEO, CANEGROWERS

m. 0429 707 809

e. dan_galligan@canegrowers.com.au



A BIG INDUSTRY DRIVEN BY GROWER CONFIDENCE



Australia is the world's second largest exporter of raw sugar



80% of Australia's raw sugar production is exported



\$2.5 billion value to the Australian economy



17,400 direct jobs, and 80,800 indirect jobs supported by the sugar industry



CANEGROWERS is the peak representative body for Australian sugarcane growers. Representing some 80% of growers, **CANEGROWERS** ensures growers needs are represented at the highest possible level of industry and government decision making. For more information visit www.canegrowers.com.au