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FRONTLINE FOR FARMERS FACING CLIMATE UNCERTAINTY

Reef Catchments is calling for adequate funding for Natural Resource Management

Worsening droughts, flooding and storms from changing climate conditions impact farmers, with flow on effects to food production, the economy and natural systems like the Great Barrier Reef. NRM organisations are the support for farmers, but they too are facing uncertainty in a changing funding climate.

The Queensland collective of NRM groups is calling on all candidates in the upcoming election to make a funding commitment to these organisations on the frontline of climate adaptation.

Reef Catchments General Manager Katrina Dent said, “Our staff are on the ground, holding adaption workshops and supporting landholders to protect their properties and livelihoods.

“We are asking for certainty to ensure we can keep staff with all their knowledge and experience doing what they do best, helping landholders manage the natural environment against the pressures it faces”, said Mrs Dent.

NRM groups generate a knowledge base on best practice in weed management, sustainable agriculture and optimal function of natural systems, and then share that across regions and with local landholders.

One major problem is weeds, which threaten productivity and can quickly become a problem if not managed. With ecological change, benign and even beneficial plants can change their nature and take over huge areas.

Another essential service NRM groups provide is to assist farmers to reduce sediment runoff to the GBR, to reduce the pressure it is under from warmer water temperatures.

“Without stability, we are losing essential staff and all the knowledge that goes along with them. It’s causing issues down stream and we are asking our candidates to adequately resource the natural resources sector”, said Mrs Dent.

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