

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

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KAP calls on Clive Palmer to “leave some water for the rest of us”

Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) Deputy Leader and Hinchinbrook MP, Nick Dametto, has called on billionaire and Australian senate hopeful Clive Palmer to negotiate a solution with the parched landholders who want access to more water but are unable to secure it due to issues created by his failed Yabulu Nickel refinery.

On the 21st of April, Mr Dametto wrote to Queensland Nickel Sales Pty Ltd (Queensland Nickel) explaining that his electorate office had been contacted by several landholders within the Black River catchment who are unable to increase their water usage or access water due to limitations with licences attached to accessing underground aquatherm.

Currently, surrounding landholders are prevented from applying for a water licence or increasing water limits on any current licences due to the size of the allocation reserved for the Yabulu Nickel Refinery, which was insolvent by January 2016, and the provisions of the *Queensland Nickel Agreement Act 1970*.

“We have exhausted all options in finding ways for the Queensland Government to allocate this water, the power now lies with Mr Palmer who has the ability to negotiate the sub-lease of the water he is sitting on while Queensland Nickel remains mothballed,” Mr Dametto said.

“The Australian Dreamtime story of Tiddalik the Frog comes to mind with this issue – please don’t drink up all the water, Mr Palmer.”

The Hinchinbrook MP said that there are many residential landholders, agricultural businesses, small businesses, and not-for-profit organisations that have a genuine need for increased water access, and it would improve the viability and liveability of the area as a whole if they were able to access some of the water allocation reserved by Queensland Nickel.

“Unfortunately, my letter seems to have fallen on deaf ears or Mr Palmer is simply choosing to ignore an important issue in the southern part of the Hinchinbrook electorate as I have not received a response,” Mr Dametto said.

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“Rather than Mr Palmer spending all his time creating these United Australia Party billboards we see up and down the Bruce Highway, he should be focusing on core issues that really matter and affect constituents.

“All these residents are asking for is an increase in water allocations to keep their residential blocks and farms viable in the dry season or install a bore for private use purposes, for example.

“With today being the last day of pre-polling and the Federal Election Day tomorrow, the United Australian Party’s Senate candidate has missed a golden opportunity to right the wrongs of the past and do the right thing by the people of Townsville.”

The Hinchinbrook MP is calling on Clive Palmer to prioritise discussions and hear the proposals from adjacent landholders in the North and North West Townsville area.

Mr Dametto has committed to being a meeting facilitator to assist with these discussions.

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Photo: State Member for Hinchinbrook and KAP Deputy Leader, Nick Dametto.

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