

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



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KAP DEMANDS CLARITY ON FOREIGN “WATER BARONS”

The Federal Government is failing Australian graziers, growers and industries by refusing to identify the foreign “water barons” that are snapping up the country’s water licences and pushing up prices, Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) Leader Robbie Katter has said.

The Traeger MP is now calling for the publication of details around each foreign owner, including their name, purpose of ownership, and date of entitlement purchase, so Australians can better understand who owns their most precious resources.

This transparency should also apply to the foreign owners of agricultural land, Mr Katter said.

According to the latest data released by the *Register of Foreign Ownership of Water Entitlements*, at as 2019 around 19.2 per cent of Queensland’s water entitlements was foreign-owned. This is double the national average.

Around 10.5 per cent of Australia’s water is foreign-owned overall, with China, the US, and the UK among the largest owners of Australian water.

Mr Katter said that he feared the foreign ownership figures, which are a year old, are now even higher and said there was a rising trend for Australian states and territories to sell-off its water resources to overseas buyers.

“The KAP is not opposed to foreign investment where it is strategic and in the best interests of all Australians, but this trend undoubtedly is not. Further the lack of transparency around who owns what parts of Australia and why is a disgrace,” he said.

“We have Australian land holders who have to fight tooth and nail to survive in this country, and a lot of the time this is linked to a lack of access to water or restrictive legislation that doesn’t enable them to get ahead.

“If the foreign owners, many of which are mega-corporations, of Australian water can raise water prices in this country then their names and faces must be revealed.”

Mr Katter said he was hoping to see a much more detailed summary of foreign ownership of water and land when the 2020 *Register of Foreign Ownership of Water Entitlements* is released.

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