



Thursday 24th March 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

By email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Bioregional Plans) Bill 2011 proposes an amendment to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to provide that bioregional plans are disallowable instruments which are subject to the Legislative Instruments Act 2003.

This is an important amendment as the EPBC Act 1999 currently provides for no appeal rights and no parliamentary review. The opportunity for natural justice and procedural fairness is limited by the extent of the departmental consultation process.

The Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) would argue that the elected representatives of the Australian Parliament should have the power of veto for declarations of our national marine reserve system, rather than this being largely left to the discretion of unelected officers of a government department.

Without this amendment the department and the Minister have unfettered power without recourse.

QSIA would also argue the proposed amendment bill allows for a further level of protection by the Parliament that ensures single issue interest groups are unable to remove the rights of others without due process.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to make this submission and seek the consideration of the Committee on this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gardner
President