

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

Dear Committee Secretary,

I write to you as a user of the the seas as a recreational fisherman.

Marine Parks have disastrous effects on not only our fishing but it effectively hides away from the true issues on fisheries which is water quality and pollution; this happens Australia wide and all levels of Government shy from their responsibilities in this regard. The Gillard Government seems to have four more Zones planned covering the rest of Australia that hasn't already been zoned - over 5.3 million square kilometres of water. Australia has 7.6 million square kilometres of land - so this next rezoning is huge and almost impossible for the layman to comprehend.

The Gillard Government have made it quite clear via this proposal that they care not for the Australian voter. Australians have always had the freedom of use of their waterways and millions enjoy fishing everyday. The impact to removing this ability will reduce not only the recreation component, it will directly impact the health sector adding to the impacts on the already stretched capability. Relaxation, which is why most recreational fisherman actually take up Australia's largest pastime, will increase stress related sickness, removal of fish from the diet will impact heart and brain conditions and more. Yes it can be argued that seafood is still available but when we have abundant oceans which neighbouring countries are jealous of (and reportedly target at times) why does Australia continue to import so much? Manage what we have better, don't lock it up.

From the general public, the economic impact by the removal of recreational (and some of the professional fishing) will be significant. In Queensland alone, 800,000 people regularly fish. With the cost of bait/lures, fuel (car and/or boat) drinks, food, equipment and so forth all of that discretionary spending will cease. From a marine industry perspective, well we just have to look at the \$300m+ in compensation paid to those impacted by GBRMPA zoning. Multiply those losses to the proportionate size of this planned zoning and Australia will be in significant economic decline.

Under the current law The Minister for Environment can decide any rezoning they like with just a signature make it happen. Public consultation has been grossly inadequate. The power of one person to impact millions of Australians and remove billions from the economy - well I think that's too much power in one hand. All rezoning requirements MUST have wide public consultation, MUST have proper evidence based (not just computer modelled) science and MUST have the right of veto through the Australian Parliamentary system. Otherwise, well we are in a socialist state.

Lastly the continued use of the underlying "precautionary principle" is what I and many other consider the lazy way out taken by political groups that don't want to address water quality issues, pollution, and policing of existing legislation. The Australian Government need to take a long hard look at the lack of funding to policing programs and funding to ensure existing fisheries compliance is met with, not kick out the users hoping:

a) they don't complain

b)it hopefully does something. That seems like it is all too hard though; Australian fishermen are not easy targets and not there as cannon fodder in a power struggle built with green influences or preference deals.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Ryan