

Additional comments from Senator Williams

1.1 I was astounded at the evidence given by two witnesses at the hearing in Byron Bay. In his evidence, Mr. Dean Jefferys, Founder, *Migaloo 2* said:

Mr Jefferys:...On the issue of a human life being more valuable than a marine life, something inside me really grates when I hear that. I see images of a baby whale tangled up and drowned in the net, and I would question whether the mother of that whale, or the baby itself, would think that a human life was more valuable than a marine life.

Senator WILLIAMS: Mr Jefferys, are you suggesting that animal life is parallel to human life?

Mr Jefferys: Definitely.

Senator WILLIAMS: Crikey!

CHAIR: Mr Jefferys is entitled to an opinion.

Senator WILLIAMS: I am entitled to mine as well, and I disagree.¹

1.2 He was followed later in the day by Miss Leah Hays, Coordinator, Sunshine Coast Environment Council.

Senator WILLIAMS: When you made your statement, it appeared that way. It looks like: who is most important—the sharks or the humans? Would you disagree with the Queensland Premier's statement that she is putting human safety above everything else? You disagree with that sort of statement?

Miss Hays: I do indeed.

Senator WILLIAMS: Do you think animals and humans should be treated equally?

Miss Hays: Absolutely.²

1.3 I find this evidence disturbing, that anyone would put the same value on an animal's life as that of the life of a human. These are examples of ill-informed statements simply to oppose proven shark mitigation measures. I urge the government and the opposition to disregard the evidence of these two witnesses as they are extreme in their views.

Senator John Williams
Senator for New South Wales

1 Mr Dean Jefferys, Founder, *Migaloo 2*, *Committee Hansard*, 2 May 2017, p. 42

2 Miss Leah Hays, Coordinator, Sunshine Coast Environment Council, *Committee Hansard*, 2 May 2017, p.74

