

Dear Senator McEwan,

Please accept this submission to the inquiry into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008.

My family has traditionally fished the Reef, Coast & Estuaries for food, income & recreation from Cape York to Mackay for the last 100 years plus.

My Father was a fisherman as was his Father & his Father before him. I spent my youngest years in a papoose strapped to my fathers back or chest, depending on the place & type of fishing undertaken @ the time. I am now 56 & have a wealth of fishing experience under my belt.

My wife is also an avid fisherperson.

It was extremely upsetting for me & my family when GBRMPA introduced their underhanded & non scientific Green Zones. I am a self confessed conservationist & firmly believe that the Great Barrier Reef is nowhere near extinction.

Criminal Convictions

This was similar to a hit in the balls. These innocent people were fishing. These people have all sorts of problems getting jobs visas and insurance because of these convictions. They were FISHING...not assaulting or raping etc. This was a mistake in making the law. The government needs to do the honest thing and fix it up. End of all the criminal records and the fines can stay – that's fair.

*If it wasn't a mistake then it was **on purpose** and **the people who drafted the laws and pulled the wool over the eyes of the politicians need to be dealt with forthwith.** A criminal record for fishing, but no compulsory record for first offenders - even for theft or assault or worse. What are they thinking?*

Powers to Inspect

From what I read this law appears that the Fisheries Officers will have more power to search and even frisk fishermen and women than the Police now have with terrorist suspects. You will be giving incredible powers to a body that some say are out of control ... just for a few fish? This is out of balance and needs to be dropped.

I have personally been the brunt of 2 overzealous Fisheries Officers & shudder to think of these two Idiots entrusted with this sort of power!

Definition of fishing

The Act doesn't just ban fishing in a green zone, it bans doing anything like looking for a fish. That means turning on a sounder, which is a responsible act of safety is banned. Again a law that needs to be thrown out.

Legal Defence

As Senator Stephens points out, this act tries to take away basic legal rights of defence. It says if you are in a green zone you know the boundaries. This Bill takes away basic legal rights and is not fair or right. I ask you to strike out the clauses.

3 strikes and you are out

Three conviction in ten years and a lifetime ban? This is absolutely ridiculous & needs to be thrown out.

Precautionary Principle

This is a major problem. This Bill doesn't listen to the umpire. We complained that the green zones were not based on science – all the liars did was ask where we caught fish - saying they wanted to make sure they didn't take those areas - and that's how they made up the green zones. No science at all because they had none.

Then there was a review in 2006 and the GBRMPA was told to use "transparent science". But they don't want to listen to the umpire they want a law that says they don't have to use science. Again this clause needs to be struck out.

The goals

The biggest change is the goals. It suddenly changes from sharing and 'wise use' to conservation This is only an anti fishing law - nothing else is effected. The reef is the most under fished reef in the world

As Australian we have rights that other countries don't. Here no one can own a beach or the ocean. But GBRMPA want to own it and lock us out of OUR park. Who voted for them? I didn't vote for an Animal Rights Party.

The Goal as it stands should stay - - we need shared responsible wise use - nothing less.

This Ball is dangerous for all of Australia. All the other EPA and marine parks follow the lead of GBRMPA. The last lot of zoning cost the government over \$255m. What will this cost our economy and our lifestyle?

Sincerely,

Linton Patrick Byrne

3rd September 2008