

Senator Mc Ewen, Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communication and Arts.

Dear Senator,

I am writing to you to submit my opposition against the bill to amend the GBRMP act 1975. I have been in the charter fishing industry for nearly 24 years and myself and my family have already had our lives turned upside down because of the last round of legislation to come out of GBRMPA. The new proposed amendments will give GBRMPA the power to do as they wish and will bring our industry to an end, and we are all not far from that now thanks to 4 years of RAP and finfish closures. It sickens me that our lives have been devastated all because of political interference and our government bowing to the pressures of the WWF. It almost seems as though WWF have the rights to the GBR and not the Australian people and rumours coming out of Canberra years ago suggests that this could be the case. In a submission to the Australian government from WWF in 2002 stated that they would like to see 30 to 50 % closures and that the required amount should be 52.6% as well as 7 protected species and seasonal spawning closures. So far they have achieved this apart from having the closures increased to 52.6 %, but if this bill is passed and we are ignored yet again they will do as they please and bring our way of life to an end and when that happens you have to question whether this is no longer a country of freedom and opportunity. It has been proven that all these closures are political and there is no science to back it up, as well our reef is the least fished almost anywhere in the world. We are told that these closures and restrictions are not fishery legislation but are based on conservation. If this is the case why does it only affect fishing. At present there is 1 reef charter boat left operating in Cairns and now you can not get a reef trip in Townsville at all, and on a personal note we were stuffed around by GBRMPA, QRAA and DEH for over 2 years when we lost over 92 % of our fishing grounds off Townsville. During our restructuring application we were put onto 4 different reps, were made to do 2 business plans and went 50 thousand dollars in debt because of it which was never recovered and our payout was pitiful having to go through the appeals process. There are too many issues to talk about including my wifes attempt at suicide which can be proven by mental health and our doctor, as well as our kids situation because of this. If you allow this bill to come in then I am going to channel 9 with the backing of our industry as well as commercial fishers and tackle and boating industry operators to expose the truths and show just how pathetic our environment and fishery legislators have become. I just knew that Peter Garrett was itching to get his hands on the reef and im sure his ideas and plans are just as pathetic as his drugo band days. How someone like him can have the power to close so much industry through the click of his fingers is beyond belief. Im sorry if you think I have a bad attitude but it has been given to me as a present from GBRMPA and the Dept of Environment over the past 4 years. In conclusion I hope sanity can prevail and the new amendments regarding enforcement and the scapegoat that they call a 'precautionary principle' are knocked on the head, but for some reason I am not confident that this will happen. Throughout the RAP and the Coral reef finfish closures none of what we have said has ever been taken onboard so why should things be any different when the government is bowing to its political pressures by conservation groups and must implement changes no matter what. If the department does

not want anybody to go to the reef anymore then pressure these conservation groups to payout all fishermen for good, and make the payout realistic. I'm sure that nearly everyone would jump at the chance to get out and then they would have achieved their goals with no more arguments. The only other thing I'm concerned about is the rights our children won't have in the future.

Regards
Ryan Moody.