

Dear Director of National Parks
(CC Minister Frydenberg, Tony Burke MP, Andrew Hastie MP),

1. I am deeply concerned about cutbacks to marine sanctuary (IUCN II/Marine National Park Zone) protection in Australia's marine parks network;

2. The network should be science based, and therefore deliver adequately sized and located sanctuaries (IUCN II/Marine National Park Zones) on both the continental shelf and in deeper waters to ensure sustainable ecology and biodiversity;

3. I support the draft management plans where the sanctuaries have not changed from what was declared in 2012, or where there are new and/or increased sanctuaries, ie:

- the new sanctuary transect and sanctuary areas over the canyon in the Bremer Marine Park;
- the new sanctuary transect over the Swan Canyon in the SW Corner Marine Park;
- the increased sanctuary area in the Two Rocks Marine Park;
- and an increase in the sanctuary area around Cape Peron to include Mangles Bay;
- and the new sanctuary area at Oceanic Shoals.

4. I reject the draft management plans where:

- sanctuary areas are made smaller (eg: the Coral Sea Marine Park, Cape York West MP, Gascoyne MP, Argo Rowley Terrace MP, the SW Corner Marine Park (Diamantina Fracture Zone section), Lord Howe Marine Park, Dampier Marine Park and Twilight Marine Park);
- or removed altogether (ie: the Wessels Marine Park, Geographe Bay Marine Park, the Peaceful Bay section of the SW Corner Marine Park);
- or where sanctuary areas have been moved to areas of far less ecological importance (eg: the Perth Canyon Marine Park, the Gulf of Carpentaria Marine Park);
- or where the Government has ignored the Review's recommendations for additional sanctuary areas (eg: in the Norfolk Island Marine Park).

5. I am shocked that the Turnbull Government has ignored the findings of its own Independent Review, proposing dramatically less sanctuary protection than the Review recommended.

6. I am gravely disappointed that the Government has failed to take into account the submissions coming out of last year's first round of consultation – where 54,000 people provided comment, the vast majority of which called for a significant increase in marine sanctuaries, not less. This diminishes my confidence in government and in particular in Parks Australia.

7. I reject the claims by government that Habitat Protection (HPZs/yellow zones) are equal to sanctuary zones. Protecting the sea floor provides only partial protection. Scientific evidence shows that partial protection does not generate biodiversity benefits comparable to sanctuaries. HPZs must not replace sanctuary zones. I am disappointed that the opportunity for marine tourism has been largely ignored by the Government, with sanctuary protection reduced at one of Australia's premiere reefs and tourism destinations – Osprey Reef – and at other important tourism assets including Flinders and Holmes Reefs in the Coral Sea, at Rowley Shoals in the NW marine region.

8. I am deeply shocked that only seven of the Coral Sea's 37 reefs are fully protected and that deep cuts have been made to the Coral Sea's large sanctuary – Australia's largest fully protected area, and the only one of a size and nature that is able to protect both the giants of the sea and a series of unique and important deep water reefs. This is a terrible lost opportunity for the environment, for marine tourism and for the long term sustainability of Australia's fishing.

9. I am very shocked that the Government has gone against its own advice and allowed destructive fishing practices like trawling, gillnetting and longlining in 38 of 44 marine parks. These practices must be ceased immediately.

10. I urge the Government to make the following changes to the draft management plans:

a) That no marine sanctuary areas declared in 2012 are removed or reduced;

b) That new marine sanctuaries are declared:

1. In the northern section of the Kimberley Marine Park;
2. at west Holmes and South Flinders Reefs in the Coral Sea;
3. in the Norfolk Island Marine Park as recommended in the Review;
4. adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park as recommended in the Review;
5. That the Shoalwater Islands Marine Park be extended be extended around Cape Peron to include Mangles Bay;
6. that every marine park under Review be afforded an adequately sized and located sanctuary zone (currently 16 of the 44 of have none) and;
7. that all marine parks on the completion of their management plans should be fully protected from oil and gas mining as has been achieved in the Great Barrier Reef MP and the Coral Sea MP.

11. And finally, I impress upon Parks Australia to recognise that this submission is a submission with equal importance as others made in any other format. That just because it is made online facilitated by community groups does not diminish its importance. I have read all related information and I support and have expanded upon the original format. I ask that you act on this and all other submissions equally.

12. Please act responsibly for the future. This is an opportunity to protect what we still have before it is gone. It is easier and more cost efficient to protect what we have than to try and recreate what we stand to lose.

Yours sincerely,
Alanna Gardner Bell

Alanna Gardner Bell
6210