

I would like to make a submission regarding proposed changes to ocean protections:

If there's one thing you can say that rings true for the majority of Australians, it's that we love our oceans, our beaches and our unique marine life. This is not only true for environmental activists, tourism operators or some small section of society – I believe it is true for the majority of the population.

The marine reserves and protections on our oceans are critical to the current and future health of our marine life – please do not wind back or reduce these protected areas. Our oceans are under so much pressure already due to overfishing, pollution, coral bleaching and rising temperatures. These are huge problems we need to tackle, and protected areas are a vital part of combating this.

To reduce protected marine areas would be a giant, short-sighted step in completely the wrong direction. It is not just the environment and marine life that would suffer, but the future industry and prosperity of our country. And not just the tourism industry – marine areas have been shown to improve fish stocks and fishing in nearby areas by providing safe places for fish to breed and grow, and where trawling can't destroy the ecosystem.

Withdrawing such protections would show that you not only do not see ocean life as worth protecting for future generations, but that you are out of touch with the concerns of everyday Australians.

Don't be the backward government that deals another blow to our oceans, mistakenly thinking the people you represent won't care. Many of us care, regardless of age, political persuasion or profession. Our oceans are a vital part of our life and culture, and what makes our country unique. Please protect them.

Yours sincerely,  
Nicola Alter