

Dear Marine Parks

CC Honourable Minister Julie Bishop (Member for Curtin)

The maintenance of the current Marine National Park Zones in all of Australia's Commonwealth Marine Reserves is vitally important to the survival and longevity of marine ecosystems and species in Australian waters. The rationale for establishing these zones in 2013 came from scientific reports that confirmed the fragility of marine ecosystems and recommend the highest of protection measures in important conservation areas (Marine National Park Zones). Public consultation strongly supported establishing the Commonwealth Marine reserves for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of Australia's oceans. Since 2013 there has been an increase in the risk of harm from warm ocean currents, rising sea temperatures, ocean acidification, pollution, lost/damaged habitats and diminished marine life populations.

It would be unethical and unconscionable to rezone currently protected Marine National Park Zones to allow human activities: fishing (recreational or commercial); commercial aquaculture; exploration and mining in these currently protected areas.

As a diver and as a pharmacologist who has worked in marine natural product drug discovery, I am well placed to understand how valuable and precious the biodiversity held in Australian waters is and how important it is to protect it. Unfortunately, in my lifetime I have witnessed mass losses and decline in natural environments and species directly resulting from human activity, with little or no recovery.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and his Government Ministers to protect Australia's oceans because it is both the ethically right thing to do and because it has been recommended by substantial peer-reviewed scientific evidence and expert opinion.

I call on the Prime Minister to be tenacious in engaging his colleagues in education and professional development to be well informed by science and evidence in their decision making.

I urge Australia's politicians to recognise Australian waters as the World's oceans, and as custodians, have bi-partisan agreement to adopt the evidence based recommendations of scientists to manage and preserve the oceans for future generations and all life on Earth.

I do not support the proposal to rezone Marine National Park Zones within Commonwealth Marine Reserves, thereby downgrading their protection from the maximal protection they currently have.

Yours sincerely,

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