

To whom it may concern,

I most strongly oppose the government's plans to cut the area of ocean Australia protects. It lacks scientific credibility and broad public support.

You would of course be aware that the scientific community have clear evidence of the positive role of sanctuaries in protecting biodiversity and fish stocks. This is not just the finding of peak science organisations in Australia. Lester Brown, writing on the value of marine sanctuaries references Jane Lubchenco of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association: "All around the world there are different experiences, but the basic message is the same: marine reserves work, and they work fast. It is no longer a question of whether to set aside fully protected areas in the ocean, but where to establish them." Brown emphasizes this point by highlighting a statement signed by 161 scientists who concur on findings from research that within a year or two of establishing a marine reserve, population densities increased 91 percent, average fish size went up 31 percent, and species diversity rose 20 percent.

Way back in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, Australia endorsed the notion of creating national networks of marine reserves that would cover 10% of the world's oceans by 2012.

Years past that deadline, it is clear that we are falling short of positive ambition on conservation.

The science on the value of marine protection is established and the commitment of the majority of the public to this approach is there.

Please revise your approach and prioritise the protection and expansion of marine sanctuaries.

Regards,

Bryce Long

NSW 2026