

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please accept this submission for the Australian Marine Parks Management Planning Comments .

In 2009 I had the absolute joy of sailing from Alotau in PNG to Townsville in Australia, across the Coral Sea. Once completing our customs and immigration checks we enjoyed a short trip to Magnetic Island.

I saw how beautiful and magnificent the marine life is in these tropical waters.

So it saddens me that you propose to wind back the ocean protections, exposing this area to the threat of midwater trawling and longline fishing. Longline fishing has unacceptable impacts on sharks, turtles and seabirds

Sailing through Thailand in early 2009 I saw the terrible impact that trawling is having on marine life and the tourism industry. These boats are carving up the ocean from the seabed up - turning a flourishing ecosystem into an underwater desert. Australia has a world class network of marine parks. Years of research and consultation went into establishing our marine park network. Please don't make the backwards step of weakening the geographic coverage or zoning within our marine parks.

I am a keen scuba diver and snorkler. I support the continued protection of Marion, Shark, Vema and Osprey reefs 100% in marine parks. They are iconic dive sites, renowned internationally. The Coral Sea is a global biodiversity hotspot for pelagic species. Rather than winding back protections, I would like to see our government agencies developing a comprehensive and effective management plan.

We know that our tropical ecosystems are already being impacted by warming waters and urban runoff, why risk their future?

As a developed country with tropical waters, Australia is in a unique position to protect our marine ecosystems and ensure their survival and ecological sustainability long into the future.

Kind regards,
Cath Blakey
3/14 Strathearn Ave,
Wollongong NSW 2500