

## **Submission on Marine Reserves, East Coast Temperate Zone, Norfolk Island**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the future zoning of the waters surrounding Norfolk Island, in the East Coast Temperate Zone.

I have been a regular scuba diver and swimmer, fisher and whale watcher over the years, and am interested in the ongoing survival of the ocean's Wildlife, including seabirds.

Norfolk Island's waters have been in the care of the Norfolk Island people for many years, hence the richness of the biodiversity still found there. Residents have a long investment in the marine environment's health and wish it to continue to be protected.

### ***The Box***

To enable the ongoing health and preservation of fish stocks within a reasonable proximity to the island, and to allow for certain areas to be 'rested' to avoid overfishing, it is most important that the Box be retained in at least its original dimensions.

It would be a positive step if in your discussions with AFMA, within whose jurisdiction this lies, you reinforce the island people's representations in this matter.

### ***The Zones***

It is very disappointing to see the reduction in protection proposed under the recent Plan of Management, and I believe it is important for all areas of industry and the environment that it be raised to the levels originally proposed.

1. The Multiple Use Zone shown within the Box exposes it to unacceptable levels of exploitation, and it should be reinstated to its former levels ie Habitat Protection Zone.
2. A Habitat Protection Zone should be in fore for the entire 200nm area surrounding Norfolk Island, except for those parts shown in green, providing a higher level of protection as National Park Zones.
3. The National Park Zones are important nurseries feeding into the surrounding areas and are essential to the continuing biodiversity of the area.

Our understanding is that this zoning (HPZ) continues to allow for Recreational and Charter fishing activities in the water column, but does not allow for any interference with the seafloor, thereby protecting it from damaging exploratory and extractive activities.

This zoning should also prevent international commercial fisheries undertaking any form of fishing that disturbs or destroys the seabed within the Box, and within the island's 200nm EEZ.

I believe this decision serves the interests of many interested parties.

The added protection thus achieved will also support the ongoing protection of the Norfolk Island waters by the Norfolk Island Fishing Association.

This will result in multifaceted positive outcomes for the environment, fishers, tourism, food security, health, recreation and the island's economy.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Christian