



Seafood Industry
Australia
The Voice of Australian Seafood

19 September 2017

Ms Sally Barnes
Director of National Parks
Australian Marine Parks Management Planning Comments
Department of the Environment and Energy
Reply Paid 787
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Ms Barnes,

RE: Draft Management Plans – Commonwealth Marine Reserves

On behalf of Seafood Industry Australia (SIA), I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed Management Plans for Commonwealth Marine Reserves. I would also like to thank you for the balanced approach that has been taken in developing these plans and recognising the concerns of many regional communities that rely on the marine environment. We appreciate that the review was undertaken by an eminently qualified and experienced team based on a long and extensive consultation with all affected parties including commercial and recreational fishers, tourism, conservation and Indigenous communities.

SIA is the new national peak body for the Australian seafood industry and represents all three sectors of the Australia seafood industry – wild-catch, aquaculture and postharvest. You will have received individual submissions from our members, including the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council, Wildcatch SA, Queensland Seafood Industry Association, NSW Fishing Industry Council and Northern Territory Seafood Council. Each submission details the effect that the proposed Management Plans would have on Australian businesses and families. We recognise the particular and specific concerns raised directly by our members, and without diminishing these specific concerns, we offer our support to the Draft Management Plans. The importance of a risk based approach, underpinned by science is critically important to our industry. We appreciate your recognition of the dynamic nature of fisheries management, which is so ably overseen by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

We would also like to congratulate the Australian government for meeting its international obligation of 10% marine parks, with its current recognition of 36% of Commonwealth marine waters being included as reserves.

Balancing environmental, economic, cultural and social values associated with access to and use of this shared resource is clearly not without its challenges. As an industry, we believe Marine Reserves are not a fisheries management tool, that is the purview of AFMA. Marine Reserves need to consider a much broader suite of risks to the environment and establish corresponding monitoring and control mechanisms. Without fully understanding the threats, achieving environmental protection is at best piecemeal. We believe that compared to the 2012 draft plans, a higher scientific rigour has been



applied to the ecological features covered by habitat protection zones. The resulting 40% increase in protection of ecological features is a positive environmental outcome.

Similarly, the area under high-level green and yellow protection zones has been increased from 60 to 63% with the advantage that there appears to be less impact on public usage. This now allows usage in areas where the seafloor is 2,000-5,000m deep and the usage will have no seafloor impact.

We welcome the recommendation for Parks Australia to collaborate with the seafood sector on issues of certification and promotion. Maximising community and consumer understanding of the quality and dynamic nature of Australian fisheries management is a positive step to allaying fears and encouraging greater support of this iconic Australian industry.

On the issue of renaming Marine Reserves, we believe Marine Parks better reflect the breadth of usage and align with their terrestrial equivalent.

Finally, we support the need for an appropriate compensation package and trust that the government will reflect on other assistance provided to primary producers in order to develop a user-friendly application process. If SIA can be of any assistance in this process please do not hesitate to make contact.

Similarly, if you require any further information please contact me on 0419 554 047 or email jane@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Lovell
CEO
Seafood Industry Australia