

Submitted on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 - 09:05 Submitted by anonymous user: 103.227.60.234
Submitted values are:

First Name: Anthony

Last Name: Florence

Organisation: Queensland Game Fishing Assoc. - Zone 2

Which sector do you represent? Recreational fishing Which draft plans are you commenting on? Coral Sea Which marine park(s) are you commenting on? Coral Sea between Cairns and Mackay What topic(s) or activity(s) are you commenting about?

- General use and access (including recreational)

- Recreational fishing

What part of the plan(s) are you commenting on?

- Part 2 - The Marine Park or Network

- Part 3 - Zoning

Which program are you commenting on? Tourism and visitor experience program Please tick this box if you would like to keep up to date with all the latest information on Australian Marine Parks by subscribing to our email updates. :

Yes please subscribe me to Australian Marine Parks news Your submission may also be published online by the Director of National Parks. Please tick 'No' if you do not want it published. Your submission will still be considered in the Director's Report on the Preparation of the Management Plans, and may be provided to the Minister and tabled before

Parliament: Yes

Does your comment relate to the renaming of marine parks? No Please type your comments below:

This submission is on behalf of the Zone 2 clubs within the Queensland Game Fishing Association, representing the Mackay, Whitsunday, Townsville and Ingham Game Fishing Clubs. The Queensland Game Fishing Association is a member of the Game Fishing Association of Australia (GFAA) which is the national controlling body for game fishing in Australian waters. The GFAA sets the Rules, Regulations and Code of Practice under which we all fish.

The Zone 2 clubs are particularly interested in the Coral Sea Marine Park and more specifically the reefs, banks and cays off the North Queensland coast between Cairns and Mackay.

While we note that significant areas of the Coral Sea are proposed as National Park Zones, we also acknowledge that there are significant areas within our accessible fishing regions proposed to be zoned as Habitat Protection Zones, allowing recreational fishing. Reef systems such as Holmes, Flinders, Marion and Saumarez are accessible enough that members of the Zone 2 clubs fish and explore these areas, typically on an annual basis if weather conditions allow.

It is common for those visiting these remote areas to observe and photograph bird and sea life, clean cays of accumulated rubbish and report any damage to weather observation equipment. We feel this can significantly contribute to the long term research and management of these areas.

In general, the Zone 2 clubs of the Queensland Game Fishing Association supports the draft plan proposed for Marine Parks and supports the Associations following comments with regard to the Coral Sea Marine Park Draft Plan.

The Queensland Game Fishing Association agrees that:

- The formation of a Marine Park in the Coral Sea is vital to the protection and ongoing management of an important part of Australian Territorial Waters.
- The level of protection provided by the Draft Plan is significant and allows for a good balance between retaining access for recreational fishers and conservation of resources.
- The current Government has lived up to its election promise of reviewing the previous plan, allowing for consultation and more importantly, listening to the true stakeholders and understanding our concerns. We commend those involved for doing that.

- This balance has been achieved by the extensive use of Habitat Protection Zones (IUCN IV), which allow recreational fishing whilst at the same time offering significant protection by prohibiting many other activities.
- Allowing recreational access under the conditions of Habitat Protection Zones offers the opportunity for further citizen science research and feedback regarding the state of the areas. In addition, access will provide eyes and ears on the water as an additional means of identifying and reporting illegal activities which may otherwise go unseen.
- By delivering an outcome that is acceptable to the recreational sector, its support should be expected to lead to greater co-operation with regard to information gathering and sharing, which we as an Association have always been willing to do.

In conclusion, the Zone 2 clubs of the QGFA accept that areas of protection are necessary, while still allowing access for recreational fishing. This draft plan appears to have been formulated based on listening to actual user groups, for the which the government should be commended. If the draft zoning is adopted, a workable balance will be achieved!