

Good Afternoon

I am totally opposed to the massive reductions in the Network of Marine Sanctuaries as originally detailed by the then Gillard Government in 2012.

This government was not given a mandate at the election to stop our protections of marine sanctuaries. In fact the opposite. We want our environment which, as an island, includes massive marine property. These are some of the richest marine areas in the world and should be protected not only for the marine life itself, but also as a pristine environment that supports the health of all of us, as humans inhabiting this island.

From a scientific viewpoint there is consensus that the use of sanctuaries is the most effective way to protect our oceans and their wildlife.

Thousands of Australians worked together to create this Network of Sanctuaries. Importantly, there is overwhelming community support for these sanctuaries, including from the vast majority of recreational fishers.

With the devastating coral bleaching we are experiencing in the Great Barrier Reef, loss of kelp forests that support the amazing dugongs, surely this is not the time to put these marine areas under greater threat by removing their sanctuary status.

I for one, do not want Australia to be known as the first country in the world to go backwards on marine protection. This surely is not the record we want in the international sphere. Our status as a tourist destination of pristine oceans would be significantly economically degraded by these changes.

More than ever the management of our surrounding marine areas needs protection and support.

I urge you to restore the Marine Network of Sanctuaries as stated in 2012. Please do not allow further destruction of the waters and marine life that embrace our island.

Yours Sincerely,

Ursula Bonzol