

I am a fifth generation Australian who grew up on the banks of the Murray river. My parents believed passionately that the Liberal Party was the best party to govern Australia. They believed it best represented the interests of hard working people like themselves.

I grew up and watched the destruction of the Murray river fishery not because it was overfished but because it was not protected from largely unregulated irrigation and the introduction of carp into the river. It was destroyed because nobody cared. It no longer bears any resemblance to the river that supported people like my parents when times were hard and the river was a source of sustenance.

I have worked in senior management positions for most of my life but have always retained that connection with fishing. I have fished in areas where marine parks were subsequently declared, initially felt disenfranchised and then delighted that fishing adjacent to such areas actually improved. For most of that period I believed that the Liberal Party supported sensible guidance to protect one of the last sustainable fisheries in the world.

I also believed that the Liberal Party was a broad church that would somehow come to sensible positions about providing not only for the current generation but also those to come. I believe that Marine Parks are an essential part of that provision.

The latest suggestion that marine parks should be reduced in size flies in the face of many average Australians who enjoy recreational fishing for the sport and the chance to augment their supermarket purchased meat. It risks denying future generations the opportunity to enjoy the special connection that comes from fishing, in reasonably sustainable fisheries and then eating the fish that is caught.

We will all be diminished as a result.

Make no mistake marine parks help the average Australian; whether he fishes, dives or just likes to sail across the water. To reduce the protection of our "buffer waters" will reap the bitter harvest that I saw in the Murray River Basin.

As the son of a lifetime Liberal supporter I am ashamed at this latest assault in the name of what? Short term profit? Campaign donations? Or Ignorance?

God save your souls. Nobody else will.

--

Max King  
PO Box 43  
Coles Bay 7215  
0438897601