

It saddens me that I even have to write this in the first place, but as a student of environmental science, and as a young Australian, I recognise the importance of protecting and honouring our marine parks and other protected areas in Australia and around the world. Having studied the benefits and, therefore, importance of protected areas for ecosystem health and productivity, I'd really like to see many, many more protected areas introduced.

But instead I write to ask that the government not HALVE the protected area - I honestly find it shameful that this is even something that is being considered!

I am currently studying in Europe on a university exchange programme, and have found myself boasting proudly about the abundance and diversity of wildlife in Australia, particularly in its oceans, and so many foreigners that I have met are so intrigued and impressed by the beauty of Australia and its environment. Yet here I am, hearing about yet another action being taken by the government to harm our unique and oh so precious land (or, in this case, water), and feeling compelled to say something in the hope that it might make a difference.

I'm sure that I speak for many Australians when I beg that you please DO NOT take such a leap backwards in regards to the protection of our oceans and, ultimately, the livelihood of our ecosystem.

Kind Regards

Ruby Hume