

I am writing to implore the government to maintain the existing extent of marine protected areas (as a minimum) in Australia including all Australian waters. Over several decades I have been keeping myself informed of the growing knowledge basis and understanding of the ecological, social and economic dynamics of our marine systems, and those around the world. There is now irrefutable information available to us that has been collected using rigorous scientific methods and socio- economic data that confirms that protection of marine environments through extensive marine protected areas is the most economically advantageous management approach for any society. In fact, the extent of marine protected areas in Australia should be significantly increased so that our communities and society overall can realise greater financial returns from their harvestable and tourism resources.

If the government reduces the marine protected area network in any way, it will reduce the long term profitability of our marine resources and their enjoyment by the community. It will also compromise our tourism industry and all of the service industries that benefit from it. I don't understand what reason the government could have for doing this other than to allow private interests to achieve short term profits that will quickly diminish as our marine resources are over exploited.

I call on the government to maintain and indeed, to increase the extent of Australia's marine protected areas, so that we can conserve our economically competitive advantage over other countries who allow their marine resources to be compromised through incompetent management. You have that data to support this action. Please use that information wisely and take the action that will benefit the people of Australia and our common wealth.

Yours Faithfully

Ben McMullen