

Dear Marine Planners

I am writing to express my dismay that the government is planning to dismantle the marine protections which were put in place in 2012.

I have received information from various conservation groups and others about the proposed changes to the marine parks and I think that to wind back by half the Coral Sea, Marion and Osprey Reefs and to take some of the reefs right out of the marine parks – Shark and Vema Reefs – is such a step backwards and will endanger the protected species of turtles and so much other marine life.

I was proud in 2012 when the government took such a responsible step to enact the marine park system and now it is so disappointing to think that the government is now taking this retrograde step.

What is even more distressing is that I read in the Canberra Times (mobile online) today that data submitted in fishing logbook reports to the Australian Fisheries Management Authority show that the number of protected turtles "hooked by commercial fishers along Australia's east coast has jumped tenfold over the past five years". The number of dolphins whales and seabirds, including albatrosses, has also increased according to the article.

The alarming fact mentioned in the article is that the government based its proposed reductions to the marine parks on data collected before the compulsory fitting of video cameras in tuna boats in mid 2015.

I really hope that the proposed changes can be reconsidered.

Yours sincerely

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