

I am most concerned to hear about the government's plans to cut our marine reserves by about half.

I understand the area of Marine Parks in the Coral Sea is to be halved, and also Osprey Reef; and Shark Reef and Vema Reef are no longer even included in a National Park.

On top of that, midwater trawling is to be reintroduced, and fishing on long-lines will be allowed from the southern tip of the Coral Sea Reserve, right up to the northern boundary.

These are appalling cuts, and a very backward step indeed. The point of Marine Reserves is to protect fish stocks, and give them somewhere to breed up. Without this protection, we run the risk of over-fishing and a complete crash of various marine populations.

It just doesn't make any economic or environmental sense. Sheep and cattle farmers don't send all their livestock to market and leave themselves with none to breed from! But that's what will happen with the fish. Even those we don't eat will suffer as by-catch from trawling operations.

We have a responsibility to protect other creatures on this planet, partly because they have as much right to live as we do, and partly for our own sakes, and the sake of future generations. We would still have the Dodo and the Passenger Pigeon if previous generations had had some sense, not to mention many Australian animals that have become extinct since white settlement.

Please do not proceed with this truly dreadful proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Donella Peters
10 Boomerang Cres
Aldgate SA 5154