

I strongly oppose the contraction of Marine National Parks. Why have the protected area in the Coral Sea and Osprey reef been halved, and Shark and Vema reefs removed from the national park? In a time when marine life is under increasing threat from ghost nets and lines, illegal fishing, plastic debris both large and microscopic, rising water temperature and ocean acidification, ship strike and pollutants, we need to continue to protect areas that are still in good condition, and provide greater protection of areas that are under threat. The roll back is counter productive, and will only have adverse effects on our marine life, including stock of commercially valuable fish, and tourism for many types of operators including divers. The reintroduction of midwater trawling and long-lining will only further add to existing pressures. Will patrol, monitoring and reinforcement increase commensurate with the reintroduction of fishing at the boundary of the reduced marine national park? if not, the aforementioned problems of ghost nets and lines killing marine wildlife, and illegal fishing, will encroach on the national park.

I implore you to reconsider the proposal to reduce the Marine National Park area and reintroduce midwater trawling and long-lining. The proposed plan of cutting marine protected areas by 50% is a significant backward step for Australia. Should it go ahead, I'll be letting my family and friends know that the coalition government is responsible for taking away protected areas.