

Dear Minister Frydenburg,

I am writing to you out of deep concern about reports about the extent to which you are rolling back the protection of our Australian coastline. I feel that, at a time when the world's oceans are increasingly in trouble from modern fishing practices, the warming of oceans, the impact of deepwater mining and the run off of fertilisers and other chemicals, it is important to provide sanctuaries for our sea life. Countries constantly get wrong the protection needed to maintain fisheries and then are surprised when it backfires such as the collapse of the cod population in the Atlantic.

From what I hear the rollback includes halving the Marine National Parks in the Coral Sea, removing protection from the Shark and Vema Reefs while lessening the protection of Marion and Osprey Reefs (when reefs everywhere are in great danger). I gather too that you are going to allow midwater trawling once again as well as extending the areas where longlining can be done. Both have contributed greatly to the lessening of fish stocks.

Please think again. I realise it is hard when business pressures are so insistent. However, there are equally businesses that stand to lose if marine parks are reduced. What is more, maintaining the health of the oceans is critical as the environment is increasingly under pressure. Documentaries I have seen about marine parks in New Zealand show a heartening recovery for protected areas and, no doubt, more fish for surrounding places as more fish are born and mature.

Yours sincerely,

Bronwyn Haddock.