

Submission to The Treaties Committee on The *Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction*

My submission is in favour of the Australian government ratifying the Agreement.

I am an Australian citizen who cares about the environment generally. A major part of the Earth's environments is made up of oceans. I am concerned about the areas of the ocean 'beyond national jurisdiction' (the High Seas). Although I do not travel the High Seas often, what goes on there greatly influences the coastal areas that I enjoy often as a resident of Sydney, and the marine resources I utilise. I also realise, as a Geography teacher, that many people around the world rely on the High Seas for their livelihood and sustenance for their families. Australia needs to work to assist all people to live a better life.

The Agreement needs to be ratified by at least 60 countries by September 2025 or it will lapse and this opportunity to protect the world's oceans will be lost. If it is ratified it will be very powerful as a tool to

- promote equity and fairness between various users of the High Seas, both now and into the future. These users may be different groups in Australia and/or people from different countries
- tackle environmental degradation, for example from pollution of oceans
- fight climate change, for example by protecting marine organisms that sequester carbon, and
- prevent biodiversity loss in the high seas, by providing ways to stop overfishing.

It will help protect the 99% of the world's oceans that are currently not being protected in any meaningful way.

The current government should move to ratify this Agreement as soon as possible.