

Submission to the Inquiry into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other
Legislation Amendment Bill 2008

7th of September 2008

Michael James Delisser

Dear Committee member

Please accept my submission to the inquiry into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008.

My name is Michael Delisser and I'm a postal worker living in Brisbane, my passion in life is fishing and boating, I also take pictures and write magazine articles on the subject of fishing for several publications. Since 1988 I've had a particular interest in the southern sections of the Great Barrier Reef and continue to visit that area several times a year.

I urge you to rethink the Law as it describes the definition of fishing. This is ridiculous and proof that the pastime of fishing is on some sort of hit list. How can it be possible in a country like Australia to be charged with an offence because some one suspects you might be searching for fish. I have a combination GPS & echo sounder and I use it to safely travel around the GBR including across some "Green Zones", having the unit switched on now will place me in breach of the law. To obey this law would place my crew and I at great risk.

I also think the use of "Precautionary Principle" in the Act is another attack on recreational fishermen and users of the reef. The GBRMPA should be made by the Government to back up its green zones and its actions with scientific facts and hard data. The fact is the reef is in no danger from recreational anglers and I believe this clause should be struck out.

I'm also very concerned for the plight of the anglers who received mandatory convictions for fishing in GBR Green Zones between the years of 2004 and 2006. I feel this is unjust and the Government should do everything in its power to remove the criminal record carried by these 324 Australians. It's unfair, unnecessary, unAustralian and not in keeping with the original intention of the Act.

The Governments actions on these issues will be the determining factor when I cast my vote in the next Federal election.

Regards
Michael Delisser