



The Secretary
The Senate Standing Committee on Environment,
Communications and the Arts
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Re: - Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2008

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the above Legislation we would firstly like to give you an overview of the Marine Tourism Industry as follows,

According to the latest Access Economics report, commissioned by the Commonwealth Government, marine tourism in the Great Barrier Reef region is worth \$5.1 billion and employs 54,000 people. It is a major export earner and dwarfs other industries in the area (for example commercial fishing contributed \$120m and employed 640 people.)

This is an increase from 1999, when a Productivity Commission estimated that revenue raised by tourism within the GBR catchment was in excess of \$4.3 billion and created 37,000 jobs.

Also in 1999, Productivity Commission figures demonstrated that tourism was the largest employer in the region and second only to mining in value to the economy.

A study commissioned by AMPTO, Tourism QLD and the Cairns City Council and conducted by Hassals and Associates in 2001 showed that the value of the Marine Tourism Industry in the Cairns/Port Douglas area alone was \$736 million in the previous year.

A further study by Hassals and Associates, commissioned by Tourism Queensland, shows the marine tourism industry in 2001 paid the following major taxes:-

- a. \$187.5 million in income tax,
- b. \$8 million in EMC, and,
- c. \$19.9 million in company tax.

This makes a total of \$215.4 million in revenue to the Commonwealth who pay out \$30 million for the GBRMPA. A net gain of \$185.4 million for the Commonwealth!

The Queensland State Government receives approximately \$124 million of this Federal revenue through GST and collects another \$19 million in other taxes paid by the Marine Tourism Industry. It spends about \$23 million on the GBR.

Through the payment of the EMC, industry contributes \$8 million per year to the GBRMPA budget of which \$1.2 million was paid to the CRC Reef for applied research.

There are over 2 million visitors to the GBR each year and research shows that the GBR is the most significant attraction for tourism within the North QLD region with about 80% of tourists visiting the GBR at least once.

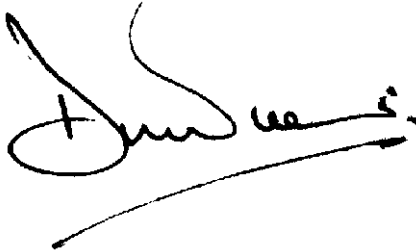
As you can see therefore, we are the largest stakeholders in the GBR. We note the following points.

The current legislation has been several years in the making it follows extensive consultation with interested parties by GBRMPA concerning the zoning and later by a special committee comprising very senior departmental officials that reviewed the GBRMP Act. We feel that it would be completely inappropriate and a waste of public monies to revisit all the issues again

We are satisfied with the legislation and commend its adoption with the following minor amendments taking into account other submissions made in the Senate.

- (a) Membership of the Authority - We would strongly suggest that one position be allocated to someone with specific expertise in Marine Tourism and believe that a submission has been made to this effect by Senator Ian MacDonald in the Senate.
- (b) Criminality of fishing in green zones - while we do not claim to be familiar with comparable penalties in other areas, having a criminal conviction recorded appears to be a bit severe.
- (c) Definition of what constitutes fishing - We consider that the current definition is adequate and feel confident that the law will be administered sensibly.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Windsor', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

DAVID WINDSOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR