

Benn Hardie

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Senator McEwen, Chair  
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts  
by email to [eca.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:eca.sen@aph.gov.au)

Dear Senator McEwen,

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

I am a 60 year old retired Marine Engineer who resides most of the time on my 50 ft timber motor cruiser.

I have cruised and fished the Great Barrier Reef for as long as I can remember , being first taken to the reef by my father , a ex Changi POW some 45 years ago.

My boat is named in his honour as it is an expression that he bought home and said he would always use to name a boat.

I was pretty upset with the marine parks when they were introduced a few years ago. Not that I am against conservation but feel that not enough science was used in evaluating the areas to be closed and so popular fishing spots ( close enough for local anglers to access) were closed and vast tracts of reef closed so one would have to travel long distances to get to a fishing spot this in a time when we are attempting to conserve our fossil fuels.

The criminal conviction of people who trespassed on the Green zones was and is ridiculous. This should be more likened to a speeding fine and if further transgressions are committed and people are found with illegal fish then they should be punished.

The inspection powers of the inspectors also appear to be out of wack with what they are policing.

It is not as if these fishermen and their families are terroist.

The act also appears to ban not just fishing but anything that looks like fishing, is this not taking things to far.

If one crosses a green zone with ones fish finder on am I then guilty of illegal fishing or intent and so fined and get a criminal conviction that will then probably hamper my further overseas travel or prospect of obtaining consulting work to prop up my superannuation during these hard economic times.

3 strikes and you are out; this is a bit draconian isn't it.

Surly one wouldn't or shouldn't get a lifetime ban after 3 fines in 10 years.

This should be removed from the act.

### **Precautionary Principle**

This is a major problem.

It has been well documented that no science was used to justify these green zones and as a consequence they were requested to use “transparent science “ but this was apparently ignored.

This clause needs to be removed.

It would appear to be this act is totally against fishing and all we anglers will be closed out of this magnificent fishing and cruising ground.

We will only be able to visit and look whilst on paid charters.

No one owns this Great Barrier Reef it is ours all Australians and we should be allowed to visit and fish it with out these draconian measures.

All Australians would back some reasonable scientific based closures and conservation measures but not this Close Out mentality.

Regards

Benn Hardie