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Dr Jacqueline Dewar
Inquiry Secretary
Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Committee
PO Box 6100 Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

RE: Inquiry into Australia's national parks, conservation reserves and marine protected areas
Terms of Reference

Dear Dr Dewar,

Thank you for the Committee's invitation to appear before the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee inquiry into Australia's national parks

This submission provides the Committee with a recent survey and expert comment solicited by the Marine and Coastal Community Network on Marine Protected Areas in the lead up to the first International Marine Protected Areas congress (IMPAC) in 2005 to be compiled in our national publication, Waves.

The Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) surveyed state and territory agencies with regards to the development and resourcing of marine protected areas. MCCN also solicited more independent overviews from leading practitioners and experts on a range of areas as well as more independent non-agency perspectives on the delivery of Marine Protected Areas in the states and territories.

These are summarised in a special Marine Protected Areas Update edition of the MCCN's national newsletter, Waves (Vol 11(2) Spring 2005) which is tabled as an appendix to this submission.

The table summarising the states responses has been abridged in the publication- but a more expanded version has also been tabled and is available on line at <http://www.mccn.org.au/article.php/id/821/>

Additionally, I have included in the appendices a Summary of Key Points of a Submission by myself to the Parliament of South Australia's Environment, Resources & Development Committee Inquiry into Marine Protected Areas.

The full text of this submission as well as other related submissions and Hansards of evidence to the inquiry is available on the Environment, Resources and Development Committee, Completed Inquiries section of the SA Parliamentary Website

http://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/committees/documents/EnviroResDev/public_documents/Completed%20Inquiries/54%20Report%20-%20Marine%20Protected%20Areas/Submissions/11%20MCCN.pdf

The views and opinions expressed in this submission are those of the author, or authors cited, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Marine and Coastal Community Network or participants of the MCCN or its funding bodies.

Yours Sincerely



Tony Flaherty,
South Australian Regional Coordinator,
The Marine and Coastal Community Network

About the MCCN and the author

Established in 1993, the Marine and Coastal Community Network's primary objective is to assist community involvement in caring for our ocean and coasts. The Network promotes wise use of resources to ensure long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems and the protection of critical areas and species. Over 10,000 individuals, groups and agencies are now participating directly through the MCCN mailing list with over 1,000 participants in South Australia. The Network is not a government agency, but is supported by the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust.

The MCCN is founded on a four guiding principles:

- That good decision-making relies on information that is: Clearly Understandable, Accessible, Up-to-date and Relevant.
- There is a need to manage human activities to ensure that long-term sustainable use of marine systems can be achieved, and detrimental environmental impacts minimised.
- The community has a right to be involved in decision-making.
- Everyone has a right to their point of view, but decisions that affect whole communities should be based on informed and considered opinions.

As well as a background in wildlife and park management, Tony Flaherty has worked for the Marine and Coastal Community Network as their South Australian Regional Coordinator since the opening of its SA office in 1994. He has an extensive background in regional, national and international marine and coastal issues including Marine Protected Areas.

Mr Flaherty has been involved in facilitating strategic approaches to community involvement in a range of state and commonwealth coastal and marine management processes and policies.

He has been involved in a range of activities to encourage the development of Marine Protected Areas in South Australia since the and was one of the co-organisers of Marine Surveys of Innes National Park for the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia, in 1984. This survey involved the identification and underwater mapping of marine floral communities and fish species off the coast of Innes National Park on Yorke Peninsula to provide baseline data to facilitate the integration of marine environments with the park's management.

Over the last decade Mr Flaherty has been involved in organising a range of forums to discuss marine protected areas and has also participated in most state marine and coastal policy processes including the community consultative committee for the development of the Marine and Estuarine Strategy and the previous state government's SA Representative Marine Protected Areas Task Force and the National Whale Recovery Group and is currently a member of the SA Working Group on Marine Species of Conservation Concern and the SA Government's Natural Resources Management Council Assessment Sub-committee.

As well as working in marine environments aboard research and sailing vessels, he has a range of marine wildlife and community development experience overseas including work in Alaska (assessing wildlife impacts from the Exxon Valdez oil spill), Channel Islands National Park California Australian Antarctic and subantarctic territories (seal and seabird surveys work), and work Central America (turtles surveys, community development and health projects) and facilitating marine conservation and MPA workshops for East Timorese fishing communities and East Timorese transitional government agencies.

'The first rule of intelligent tinkering is to save all the pieces.'

1930's American forester and conservation pioneer Aldo Leopold

The National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas

In 2005, the Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) invited the Australian government Department of Environment and Heritage, to submit a short overview of its progress and an "independent" evaluation of the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas' was solicited from Dr Karen Edyvane with other articles solicited from MPA practitioners and experts. Since this time the Australian Government has announced the establishment of a number of MPAs in association with its South-east regional marine planning process.

There is no doubt that *"significant progress has been made on the establishment of a national, representative system of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA) in Australia's EEZ (Edyvane, K.S., 2005).*

Several national governments have established plans to create their own MPA networks, with some of them committing to set aside certain percentages of their waters as no-take marine reserves... Momentum is due to emerging scientific opinion on the benefits of MPAs, including no-take marine reserves. It is now generally accepted by scientists that such reserves can help maintain biodiversity, protect unique areas, conserve essential habitat, and serve as control sites for fisheries management.(Davis, J.B., 2005).

Despite the progress that has been made, it can generally be acknowledged, that with some exceptions (i.e. the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park), Marine Protected Areas are well behind terrestrial protected areas in terms of staffing, funding resourcing and levels of area that could be regarded as highly protected under International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categories of Protected areas status.

The Australian Government agency, the Department of Environment and Heritage, charged with implementation of MPAs has recognised that *"despite the achievements to date, a number of gaps remain in Australia's distribution of MPAs, especially in deep-water and cooler temperate oceans. The priority is to establish MPAs in large-scale bioregions that are not already represented within the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (NRSMPA)." (Garrett, P. & Wilks, L. 2005).*

Within Commonwealth waters, MPAs in tropical regions have generally been afforded high levels of protection (Category IA or II) (eg. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Elizabeth and Middleton, Mermaid Reef Marine National Nature Reserves, Ashmore Reef National Nature Reserve)... Commonwealth MPAs in temperate waters however have typically been zoned for multiple-use (IUCN Category VI or IV) (Edyvane, K.S., 2005).

The Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage has recognised that the challenges in the development of representative MPAs large-scale through the offshore regional marine planning process which has been undertaken in the South-east region *"primarily lie in dealing with the limits of the information base, managing the sheer scale of the process and ensuring effective conflict resolution and communication across the oil and gas industry, the commercial fishing industry, conservation groups as well as shipping, recreational fishing, tourism and Indigenous interests" (Garrett, P. & Wilks, L. 2005).*

Edyvane (2005) concludes that there has been *"limited progress by the Taskforce on Marine Protected Areas (TFMPA) and the Commonwealth in undertaking the SPA to implement the NRSMPA... Of the 34 actions of the SPA to be implemented over 3 years (1999-2001), only 9 were completed. The lack of progress has largely been due to a lack of resources to the TFMPA, and the move by the Commonwealth (under Australia's Oceans Policy) to implement the NRSMPA through regional marine planning"*

Key Issues for the NRSMPA identified by Edyvane (2005) include *"the need for cooperative, cross-jurisdictional, complementary MPA planning across Australia's continental shelf - to address key cross-shelf linkages and patterns of connectivity and protect ecological values and areas of mutual conservation interest" and the "Need to adopt consistent, 'science-driven' approaches and include 'seascapes' and ecosystem-specific, planning criteria, operating principles and benchmarks, for MPA identification and selection."*
(Edyvane, K.S., 2005).

MPAs Progress in States and Northern Territory

With no legal requirement for States and Territories to coordinate their processes for establishing representative systems of MPAs, each jurisdiction has generally adopted its own approach. In Queensland, the MPA system is fully compatible with the GBRMP. (Kelleher et al 2005)

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and high levels of protection, are generally well established in tropical (and subtropical) regions, where marine tourism has been a major economic driver, but poorly established in Australia's cool temperate regions (where fishing and petroleum industries dominate) (Edyvane 2005).

In the States and Territories, the establishment of a system or network of MPAs has proceeded gradually – usually one MPA at a time. However, in 2003 Victoria established a significant network of highly protected MPAs (Kelleher et al 2005).

Despite the national (and international) initiatives to establish an NRSMPA over the past decade, several jurisdictions have failed to establish MPA systems recently, e.g. NT and SA (Edyvane 2005).

As mentioned previously, The Marine and Coastal community network invited State and Territory government agencies to participate in a survey of MPAs conducted by the MCCN. These were summarised in a special Marine Protected Areas Update edition of the MCCN's national newsletter, Waves (Vol 11(2) Spring 2005) which is tabled as an appendix to this submission.

It should be noted that the states answers to the survey in some cases may appear at slight odds with some situations on the ground and that some states were unable to provide answers to some questions and there are differences of detail between states. However the survey may serve as a useful snapshot for the Senate inquiry with regards to a number of aspects of MPA establishment and mangement across the country.

From analysis of progress of figures given to the states in the MCCN survey based on total area of MPAs as a percentage of state waters, Queensland is definitely the leader, with up to 51.51% of its waters under some form of Marine Protected Area (some overlaps the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park [GBRMP]); followed by New South Wales (18.50%); Western Australia (12.47%); Victoria (9.49%); South Australia (5.18%), Tasmania (5.05%) and the Northern Territory (3.11%)

However the area of No-Take/ Sanctuary Areas is limited in most states. Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria would appear to be making better progress in the establishment of higher protection in their MPA systems (IUCN Cat. IA–IB or Category II) than the other states.

From the MCCN Survey table a very rough summary might be interpreted as:

- New South Wales has a comparatively small area (jurisdiction) with an MPA system that delivers limited protection (IUCN I & II), but it is comparatively well resourced.
- South Australia has a moderate area of MPA, largely dominated by the 1996 gazettal of the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, but offers only a small area of real protection (IUCN I & II), and has minimal resourcing.
- Queensland has a large area with reasonable to good protection (IUCN I & II) and appears well resourced. It would also appear to have good linkages with Commonwealth MPA process via the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
- Tasmania has a small to medium area with reasonable protection (IUCN I & II) but is under-resourced.
- The Northern Territory has a moderate area, but with very little real protection (IUCN I & II) and minimal resourcing.
- Victoria has a small area but with reasonable real protection (IUCN I & II) and appears well-resourced.
- Western Australia would appear to have a large area, but with limited real protection (IUCN I & II) and an undisclosed amount of resourcing.

In the MCCN survey, only three states were able to report on the budget allocated to MPAs. (NSW: \$2 million (2005-6); SA: \$567 000 (2005-6) + NRM funding; QLD: \$7.5 million).

The Northern Territory had no dedicated MPA budget, but since the survey, a newly established Marine Group (Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts) has been formed in the Northern Territory to undertake a range of short-term, collaborative, NHT-funded marine research (ie. biological field surveys, marine debris,) and conservation planning projects (ie. Marine Protected Areas, ecosystem-based marine planning)

Another key area for resourcing is the allocation of staff. Again across the board this is limited, though it is increasing. Victoria and Queensland claim a wide human resources allocation to marine Queensland states it has some 130 staff and Victoria 200 - but this appears to be an allocation across both terrestrial and marine. NSW claimed 4 management, seven enforcement and three research positions dealing with marine and SA six management positions. Tasmania, whilst progressing the establishment of MPAs would appear to have failed to deliver on ground resourcing for MPAs.

In addition to the lack of on-ground staff for management, the access to vessels is in many states appears extremely limited. Some states lacking their own dedicated vessels do have formal or informal arrangements for accessing other departmental vessels. Such vessel based resources are important in being able to deliver effective on ground enforcement and, monitoring and management of MPAs.

The selection process for MPAs varies between states. There is little consistency across states with either planning, environment primary industries agencies or separate authorities being involved.

Edyvane concludes that the planning/establishment of the NRSMPA has generally been successful in jurisdictions that have adopted **independent, statutory planning processes** such as those in WA, Victoria and NSW) (Edyvane 2005).

Progress on implementing the NRSMPA by State and Territory jurisdictions has been assisted by the development of formal policy frameworks for representative systems of MPAs in WA, Tasmania, Victoria, NSW and SA. Queensland has failed to finalise its draft strategic policy, while the NT has yet to develop a specific, strategic and representative MPA policy framework. (Edyvane 2005).

There is community involvement in most states (except Tasmania and the NT in Advisory Bodies dealing with MPA processes. However there are few mechanisms for direct community involvement in selection and nomination (similar to the model provided by community nominations in New Zealand Marine Reserves legislation) is lacking except in Tasmania (in South Australia eight marine areas were been nominated by conservation groups under provisions under the Wilderness Protection Act in 1998 but have yet to be assessed.

As mentioned previously, in the lead up to the first international marine Protected Areas congress (IMPAC) in 2005, the Marine and Coastal Community Network surveyed state and territory agencies with regards to the development and resourcing of marine protected areas.

MCCN also undertook to solicit more independent (i.e. not state agency) overviews on MPA progress in the states and territories, from leading practitioners and experts. These were then also peer reviewed by additional non-agency experts or practitioners to ensure they were fair and balanced overviews. These were published in the MCCN's national publication Waves, (Volume 11, Number 2, Spring, October, 2005, available online at the MCCN website, www.mccn.org.au).

The context of these overviews have been further summarised of below for the benefit of the Committee.

Queensland

In Queensland, whilst considerable progress has been made recently to boost protection for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP), there has been much less progress in establishing MPAs in other regions of the state (Leck, R., 2005).

In 2004, the Australian Government GBR zoning plan increased the percentage of marine national park zones (where commercial and recreational fishing are prohibited) from less than 5% to more than 33% of the marine park. The Queensland Government has jurisdiction over the intertidal area of the GBRMP above the mean low-water mark. In November 2004 it implemented the Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park (GBRCMP). The GBRCMP mirrors most of the adjacent Commonwealth zoning in these inshore waters (Leck, R., 2005).

Leck (2005) notes that little progress has been made outside the GBR process despite the Queensland Government's long-standing election commitment to a 'border to border' marine park. In regions where the Queensland Government is establishing new marine parks, the percentage of marine national park zones proposed is minimal.

The proposed zoning plan for Great Sandy Marine Park (GSMP) (Northern Section) only designates 3.8% of the park's area as marine national park zones. The new park includes two existing marine parks (Woongara and Hervey Bay) (Leck, R., 2005). Leck considers this level of protection as *"inadequate for a region of such high biodiversity values and is inconsistent with the zoning of the Queensland Government's GBRCMP (approximately 20% of this park was zoned as marine national park)*. Leck also notes that the Moreton Bay Marine Park (MBMP) zoning plan protects less than 1% of its area in marine national park zones (Leck, R., 2005).

The Gulf of Carpentaria is another major area where the State government is yet to progress MPAs. Leck considers that *"the Queensland Government's reluctance to effectively engage in the Australian Government's Northern Regional Marine Planning process presents considerable challenges to establishing MPAs west of the Cape York Peninsula.*

Western Australia

Ward (2005) notes that marine protected areas in Western Australia are designated as marine nature reserves (highly protected), marine parks (four zones of use, including no-take sanctuary zones), and marine management areas (multiple use).

Up to 1995, WA had declared six MPAs: and an estuarine MPA: Swan Estuary Marine Park. Since 1995, a further three marine parks have been declared. Whilst 12% of the WA marine jurisdiction is within some form of MPA, much of this provides only limited protection for biodiversity, with about 2.5% within highly protected zones (sanctuary zones, nature reserves and no-take zones in MMA (Ward, T., 2005).

As such Ward (2005) considers the existing system of MPAs in Western Australia as not fully comprehensive or representative. Of WA's 18 bioregions, 12 have no MPAs. *"Whilst some bioregions have significant areas protected within MPAs, this does not necessarily indicate that adequate samples of their biodiversity are protected, because the habitats and species protected probably do not represent all of the types contained in the bioregion"* (Ward, T., 2005).

However Ward (2005) notes that strong programs of management and well-designed management plans are either now in place or are under development for existing MPAs in the state.

Ward (2005) considers MPA establishment in Western Australia to be *"confounded by highly anachronistic legislation that classifies all marine species other than 'wildlife' (mammals, reptiles, birds and amphibians) as 'fish' under the WA Fish Resources Management Act 1994."*

This has resulted in a *"confused regulatory environment and a tortuous and inefficient process for the establishment of new MPAs"* and as such has produced only limited protection for much of WA's marine biodiversity.

Ward (2005) does note that "high levels of protection have been recently achieved for Ningaloo Marine Park (33% of that Bioregion is dedicated to no-take) and that a number of new marine parks are well advanced in the planning process.

The Ningaloo process indicated strong public support for high levels of protection for WA's highly valued marine ecosystems. Though Ward cautions that "*It is not clear if there will be such public support for other planned MPAs*" (Ward, T., 2005).

New South Wales

In New South Wales a 1995 Labor Party promise to establish a 'comprehensive system of marine parks' became a relatively weak Marine Parks Act in 1997. The NSW Marine Parks Research Committee has proposed that each of the State's six marine bioregions will have a large marine park by 2007 (Anderson, T., 2005).

Unlike terrestrial national parks, NSW MPAs support 'multiple-use' and were not dedicated specifically to the conservation of animal and plant life. Fully protected/no-take sanctuary zones (IUCN category 1) are a small part of total area. Anderson (2005) considers management of NSW MPAs to be complicated by the involvement of a "triumvirate of NSW Fisheries (NSWF now the Department of Primary Industries), the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Premier's Department" with minimal staff appointed to the new Marine Parks Authority" (Anderson, T., 2005).

Anderson (2005) considers that the legislation offers no effective protection until zoning and management plans are declared. These plans were delayed for up to six years in the cases of the Jervis Bay Marine Park and the Solitary Islands Marine Park (Anderson, T., 2005). Anderson (2005) considers that the "complex nature of these 'multiple-use' plans makes education and compliance both challenging and a priority".

Fisheries (NSWF now the Department of Primary Industries) has established a range of aquatic reserves, Anderson (2005) considers new plans for developed for these aquatic reserves, which regulate particular extractive activities, to have produced relatively poor results for biodiversity conservation (Anderson, T., 2005).

Anderson considers that NSW has yet to effectively protect the endangered Grey Nurse Shark (GNS) via 'sanctuaries'. The government appears to have ignored the advice of the NSWF-selected GNS advisory committee which unanimously recommended fully-protected sanctuary zones for the 10–12 identified GNS critical habitat areas. In contrast, the Queensland Government declared sanctuary zones around its four GNS critical habitat areas and the Commonwealth Government also moved to fully protect two offshore GNS sites, at Pimpernel Rock and Cod Grounds (Anderson, T., 2005).

Victoria

A range of MPAs have been declared in Victoria over the last 25 years. Earlier parks were predominantly multiple-use areas and had little legislative protection. Many terrestrial parks under the National Parks Act 1975 are declared to low-water mark and are given de facto protection to the intertidal zone (Wescott, G., 2005).

In 1982 the Victorian Labor Government promised to carry out a comprehensive study of Victoria's coastal waters and establish a suite of marine protected areas (MPAs). Some marine parks, marine reserves and some marine and coastal parks were reserved but were multiple-use and lacked clear legislative protection (Wescott, G., 2005).

A 1992 Marine and Coastal Study, conducted by an independent government advisory body – the Land Conservation Council (LCC, later replaced by the Environment Conservation Council, ECC), ran for over eight years with final recommendations of the ECC delivered to state government in August 2000. Thirteen national parks and eleven sanctuaries were proclaimed in November 2002 declared under an amendment to the National Parks Act. These 'high protection' IUCN Category I or II i.e. 'no-take', MPAs cover just over 5% of Victoria's coastal waters, leaving 95% for relatively under-controlled resource use (Wescott, G., 2005).

Wescott (2005) considers there to be a range of 'unfinished business' with regards to marine conservation, arising from other recommendations in the LCC/ECC Marine and Coastal Study and other reports.

He considers these to include: the protection of intertidal invertebrates (unprotected outside declared protected areas); the allocation of coastal foreshore/intertidal areas to recreation and conservation zones; and proposals for either the 'marinising' of the Victorian Coastal Strategy or possibly a separate Marine Strategy/Plan that would develop spatial management arrangements for the 95% of Victoria's coastal waters not included in MPAs. Wescott also notes that there are some omissions from the Victorian MPA system such as no mudstone-based MPAs on the Great Ocean Road between Point Addis in the east and Port Campbell in the west, nor the area around Cape Liptrap. (Wescott, G., 2005).

Wescott considers that whilst the high protection MPAs declared three years ago is an excellent starting point for further improvement in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Victoria's coastal and marine environment. He also notes the marine habitat mapping program now being conducted and rocky shores monitoring projects which will be crucial to improving understanding of how comprehensive, adequate and representative the current Victorian MPA system is (Wescott, G., 2005).

Tasmania

Only two of the marine bioregions identified around Tasmania are well represented within the marine reserve system (Macquarie Island and Twofold Shelf [the Kent Group]). Three marine bioregions have some, inadequate, representation (Davey, Bruny and Freycinet). The remaining four regions are not represented at all (Nicol, D., 2005).

Baseline studies were conducted in all Tasmanian reserves apart from the Macquarie Island reserve and good research is being conducted in most Tasmanian MPAs. However resources allocated for management of the reserves remains inadequate, with little spent on enforcement or public education. Nicol (2005) notes that no state government employee works full-time on the management or development of Tasmania's MPA system (Nicol, D., 2005).

The Tasmanian Government created its first marine reserves in 1991. These were three small reserves at Tinderbox and Ninepin Point in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel; Governor Island (at Bicheno); and a larger reserve at Maria Island (Nicol, D., 2005).

The then state Labor Government stated that it would consider creating marine reserves at a range of candidate areas, including the Kent Group of Islands (Bass Strait) and Macquarie Island.

In the 1990's CSIRO and the University of Tasmania research revealed the marine habitats at Port Davey and Bathurst Harbour were of international significance and needed protection.

In the 1990's a number of MPA discussion papers were developed. The Commonwealth Government funded assessments, development and initial informal stakeholder consultations for MPA processes related to Kent Group of Islands and Port Davey (Nicol, D., 2005).

The State government instigated the Marine and Marine Industries Council (MMIC), comprised state officials and relevant stakeholders. A Tasmanian Marine Protected Area Strategy (TMPAS) was released in 2001 (Nicol, D., 2005).

The process has been handed to an independent Resource Planning and Development Commission (RPDC), not the State Government. Nicol (2005) notes however that with the Port Davey MPA, the relevant minister modified the RPDC boundary recommendation, removing one sanctuary zone area (apparently after input from commercial fishing interests) (Nicol, D., 2005).

A sub-Antarctic marine reserve incorporating all state waters was established around Macquarie Island in 2000 independent of the MMIC process. MPAs in the Kent Group of Islands and Port Davey were gazetted in 2005. These three MPAs contain large no-take areas and the Macquarie Island reserve (all 74,000 ha of state waters) is all no-take. Nicol (2005) notes with concern that the Commonwealth Government allowed shark fishing with gillnets to occur within the Kent Group MPA (Nicol, D., 2005).

South Australia

Currently South Australia has less than 5% of its waters within recognised MPAs, and an even smaller proportion of that is within highly protected MPAs. During the past decade, only one substantial MPA has been established, the large, multi-zoned Great Australian Bight Marine Park (GABMP) – 168,320 hectares in state waters and 1,920,759 ha in Commonwealth waters. The GABMP was established largely under Commonwealth direction and funding, and was declared under three different Acts with limited protection from exploitative activities (Baker, J.L., 2005). There is a "pilot" MPA project which has been in progress for some years for the "Encounter" MPA in the Fleurieu and part of Kangaroo Island.

SA's existing MPAs do not provide a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of MPAs. Many reserves are small, and clustered in limited parts of the gulfs; most bioregions and habitats are significantly under-represented; some are 'paper parks' with no prohibition or management of activities (e.g. extensions around island conservation parks); some are continually subject to numerous pollutants; and most are not well monitored or managed (Baker, J.L., 2005).

Whilst SA was one of the first Australian States to proclaim marine protected areas in the 1970's, most of those aquatic reserves are relatively small (the largest is ~3,230 hectares, at Whyalla - Cowled's Landing; the smallest is Goose Island, 54 ha). Not all aquatic reserves are highly protected with some permitting spearing of finfish and sharks, bait-digging and crab-collecting (Baker 2005).

Successive State Government's have released policies on MPAs. The most recent, integrated into the state's strategic plan, commits to establishing 19 large, multi-zoned MPAs, spread across seven of the eight bioregions. MPAs in the eighth bioregion (Eucla), which currently contains the GABMP, will be considered at a later stage (Baker, J.L., 2005).

Baker (1995) lists the issues impacting on development of the SA Representative System of MPAs as including poor integration of State Government-led marine planning. Conservation groups have criticised the multi-zoned MPA model and have been concerned about the lack of formal community involvement.

The MCCN notes that in 1998 a number of marine areas were nominated under public nomination provisions under the states Wilderness Protection Act. In the lead up to the 2006 state election the South Australian government made a commitment to assess some of the offshore island groups included in these nominations. Some of these areas, which are also identified as potential Marine Park sites, are now subject to large scale aquaculture proposals.

The State government has amended regulations under the development Act to enable these developments to be treated as complying. The establishment of industries off these islands is likely to impact on the assessment of their wilderness values. Conservation groups view the expansion of aquaculture and some of the regulatory changes made to "fast track" its development in the last decade, outside of marine planning and marine protected areas processes, as a serious impediment to development of a representative system of MPAs.

Northern Territory

Marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Northern Territory are limited. There is one marine national park, combined with a terrestrial protected area on the Cobourg Peninsula north-east of Darwin to form Garig Gunak Barlu National Park. The marine/intertidal park occupies approximately 230,000 hectares of the total 450,000 hectare park. A number of small reserves exist in the Darwin area, most of which allow recreational fishing. The Kakadu National Park, managed by the Australian Government, also contains extensive coastal zone (O'Leary, P., 2005).

Traditional Owners have a majority on the Garig Gunak Barlu National Park board, but this does not give them control over aquatic resource management within the waters of the park. The Cobourg Fisheries Management Area Advisory Committee advises on fishing matters. This committee, operating under the NT Fisheries Act, (composed of recreational and commercial fishing representatives, aquaculture interests, government agency representatives (including marine police) and Aboriginal Traditional Owners) has a

strong influence over the marine and fisheries components of the marine park management plan (O'Leary, P., 2005).

Drafting of a management plan for this Marine Park has been protracted. O'Leary (2005) suggests there are weakness in the legislative and policy framework and perceived political influences of fishing interests.

With terrestrial parks, the relevant Parks and Wildlife legislation gives stronger authority to the Parks and Wildlife agency and Traditional Owners to protect natural and cultural values as a priority in drafting management plans. O'Leary notes that "*for Garig Gunak Barlu the situation seems less clear given that the park board does not have bylaw making powers for the marine park under the relevant legislation*" (O'Leary, P., 2005).

O'Leary lists the hindrances to better conservation management of the Territory's marine estate as: "*the lack of strategic focus in available marine science resulting in very little useable or useful information to assist marine park selection, planning and management; lack of a clearly articulated policy direction from the NT Government setting out why MPAs are important and how to prioritise issues in their management; lack of a practical decision-making framework to allow progress in MPA implementation against the existing poor information background*" and a "*lack of clarity in agency responsibility and goals, stemming partly from a legislative framework that does not encourage agency leadership or provide structured pathways to implementing effective MPAs*" (O'Leary, P., 2005).

Movement towards positive progress however has been initiated with the NT Government to release a revised Parks and Conservation Masterplan following extensive negotiation with land councils and other stakeholders around improved joint management arrangements. A comprehensive review of environment legislation has been announced and the NT Fisheries Act is currently under review presenting both opportunities and challenges for MPA implementation (O'Leary, P., 2005).

The NT Parks and Wildlife Service has created a new senior marine scientist position to enhance strategic leadership to marine conservation (O'Leary 2005) and the MCCN notes that recently a newly established Marine Group (Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts) has been formed in the Northern Territory to undertake a range of short-term, collaborative, NHT-funded marine research (ie. biological field surveys, marine debris,) and conservation planning projects (ie. Marine Protected Areas, ecosystem-based marine planning).

Research and Monitoring

Historically, there has been limited little consistency with regards to research and monitoring for MPAs across the states.

The work progressed in Tasmania by Dr Graeme Edgar, Dr Neville Barrett and others at the Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute and University of Tasmania is however being used as a model for baseline monitoring in a number of temperate states. Additionally both Tasmania and Victoria are undertaking extensive marine mapping exercises which have been resourced recently through Natural Resource Management frameworks.

Dr Neville Barrett,(Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute and University of Tasmania) has identified part of the "*current problem with trying to monitor and identify such patterns is the delay in implementing the National Representative System of MPAs in many States. You cannot have an adequate monitoring program without an adequate representation of MPAs. Where MPAs have been declared in the recent past it is true to say that monitoring programs have generally been well supported by management agencies throughout Australia, subject of course to the restricted levels of funding available*" Barrett, N. (2005).

In his summary of Monitoring and MPAs for the Marine and Coastal Community Network (Barrett, N., 2005) Dr Barrett briefly outlined MPA monitoring across the states.

"In Queensland, a long-term monitoring program has been examining broad-scale annual changes in the Great Barrier Reef for the past 13 years.

In New South Wales, most MPA monitoring is usually facilitated through collaborative projects by on-ground MPA biologists. In Victoria, the recently established comprehensive MPA network has been backed up with an extensive reef monitoring program to ensure that performance objectives are met.

In Tasmania, a long-term program continues in the existing reserves and is being established in new reserves with a combination of government funding and research grants.

In South Australia, within the new Great Australian Bight Marine Park, annual monitoring includes distribution and abundance of Southern Right Whales and biological surveys in the benthic protection zone.

In Western Australia, with almost half of Australia's coastline, existing programs include shallow-water coral community monitoring at the Rowley Shoals and Ningaloo Marine Parks, shallow-water seagrass and macroalgal community monitoring at the Shark Bay and Marmion Marine Parks, and biodiversity monitoring at the Jurien, Marmion and Shoalwater Islands Marine Parks.

In the temperate zone, one of the most important monitoring developments has been the standardisation of reef flora and fauna census methods in a wide range of declared and proposed MPAs stretching from WA, through SA, Victoria, Tasmania to NSW. Using proven techniques developed in the long-running Tasmanian study, the standardised approach will allow direct comparison of results from MPAs across Australia, and allow reliable comparison of patterns and processes operating at this scale." (Barrett, N., 2005).

Barrett (2005) points out that the bulk of studies so far have concentrated on the reef systems (rocky and coral) found within MPAs. This is primarily due to the intense and obvious human impacts through fishing, and the subsequent secondary, cascading ecosystem effects this may cause.

"However, there are many other areas where monitoring programs may be required depending on the habitats represented within each MPA, the degree and type of human impacts in the region, and the range of species encountered there. These include extent and condition of seagrass, abundance of whales, visitor numbers, extent of compliance, water quality, seabirds and estuarine mudflat infauna" (Barrett, N., 2005).

It is important to note the need for long term monitoring approaches to be established in marine protected areas. *"In many cases MPAs may take several decades to return to a 'natural' state following protection, and both vision and patience are required to adequately document this process and to respond to challenges the results may present for both conservation of biodiversity and other related MPA goals (Barrett, N., 2005).*

Education and Advisory Support and Community Engagement

At a state level agency support and resourcing for community educational and outreach programs within states are inconsistent across Australia. The Commonwealth has provided a range of community engagement processes for marine protected areas processes. Of recent note is the process undertaken for developing the Representative Areas in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park zoning Process.

Additionally the Australian Government, initially through its Marine Program and now through funding allocated via the natural Heritage Trust has resourced the running of the Marine and Coastal Community Network. However limited resources in recent years have limited its ability to engage communities in the establishment and awareness of marine protected areas in some key regions.

For over 13 years, the Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) has been facilitating community discussion on marine protected areas (MPAs) and has provided a catalyst for community input and support.

The MCCN is arguably one of the most longstanding nationally coordinated projects focused on community participation in the marine environment and MPAs anywhere in the world. It is a network often looked upon enviously in discussions with overseas agencies and NGOs.

The MCCN had its genesis at the 1991 Fenner Conference on Protection of Marine and Estuarine Areas, held by the Australian Academy of Sciences. That conference gave broad support to a proposal that the Commonwealth Environment Minister allocate funds to non-government organisations (NGOs) for an NGO maritime conservation promotion network across Australia, similar to the Threatened Species Network.

The recommendations from the Fenner Conference emphasised the importance of full and vigorous public participation at all stages of MPA decision-making and implementation. The conference recognised that effective public participation requires:

- transparency in government decision-making;
- a well-informed community;
- full access to relevant information;
- recognition of the key role of NGOs;
- adequate resources in order to ensure participation;
- action and involvement at the grassroots (in addition to umbrella type organisations); and
- full involvement of all sections of society, including Indigenous people and marine environment users.

At the time, community awareness and support for a national system of MPAs in Australia was low. However, it was believed that through community education and involvement, a sense of community ownership, stewardship and empowerment would be created – ultimately leading to successful marine conservation through an effective MPA system.

In 1991 the Australian Government established the Ocean Rescue 2000 program, to address the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's marine environment. This program made funding available to establish the MCCN. The Australian Littoral Society (now the Australian Marine Conservation Society) was contracted by the federal Department of Environment to establish and coordinate the network. By providing support for the MCCN, the Australian Government was responding – and continues to do so – to a significant community need and a hiatus in MPA and marine and coastal management.

The MCCN's initial task was to identify and bring together the many stakeholders, community groups and individuals interested in ensuring that we have clean and healthy oceans and coasts. From humble beginnings, MCCN's support base now includes not only conservation and community groups across Australia but, as reflected in hundreds of letters of support, other stakeholders such as commercial and recreational fishing bodies and local and state government.

Since its inception 13 years ago MCCN has continued to grow – as witnessed by our ever-increasing mailing list, now numbering over 10,000 participants. The role of MCCN with regards to MPAs has also evolved over this time, from a simple information provision service to fulfil more complex networking roles such as assisting coordination of data collection and organising scientific contacts for surveys. The number of organisations and individuals beginning to openly support MPAs also continues to grow. Most industry bodies have added their 'in principle' support for MPAs although issues – including the methodology of establishing MPAs, compensation, levels of protection and management – are still strongly debated.

MCCN played a significant role in the grassroots facilitation of MPAs in Australia. However, there is still much work ahead to progress towards a national representative system of MPAs, and MCCN believes there are substantial opportunities for promoting MPAs and broader marine and coastal conservation initiatives (such as work on community engagement in coastal policies, oceans policy and the regional Australian Natural Resource Management frameworks). With adequate resourcing to maintain an effective network, MCCN hopes to be able to continue its contribution to MPAs, and marine conservation in general, well into the future. (Flaherty, A. 2005)

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**Appendixes to Submission to the
Senate Environment, Communications, IT and the Arts Committee:
Inquiry into Australia's national parks**

Attachments include:

1. Marine Protected Areas Update edition of the MCCN's national newsletter, Waves (Vol 11(2) Spring 2005)
 2. MCCN Summary Table of MCCN MPA Survey of State and Territory Agencies.
 3. A Summary of Key Points of a Submission by Tony Flaherty, MCCN, to the Parliament of South Australia's Environment, Resources & Development Committee Inquiry into Marine Protected Areas
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**A Summary of Key Points of a Submission by
Tony Flaherty, South Australian Regional Coordinator
The Marine and Coastal Community Network
to the
Parliament of South Australia's
Environment, Resources & Development Committee
Inquiry into Marine Protected Areas**

The views and opinions expressed in this submission are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Marine and Coastal Community Network or participants of the MCCN or its funding bodies.

Key points of the Submission

Recognising the World Parks Congress's target of conserving 20 to 30% of the world's seas, the SA Government should set a similar target for establishment a representative system of marine protected areas (MPAs) for each of the State's recognised marine bioregions, ensuring that there are high levels of protection offered by the zoning and management.

Outside of the highly protected system of Marine Protected Areas the South Australian Government should urgently establish statutory regional marine plans which integrate objectives and zoning for the management of all marine industries and conservation of marine ecosystems.

Term I. identifying reasons for delays in introducing a system of marine protected areas, including no-take zones, around the States coastline;

Political Will

- Despite policy commitments by both major parties since 1998 to developing Marine Protected Areas, the delays in the South Australian MPA process over the last two decades would appear to be related to a **lack of political will to deliver on these commitments.**
- The state's major political parties have all promised to implement marine parks since the state's Marine and Estuarine Strategy in 1998, which set a timeline of 2003 to establish a system of marine parks. That same year, The International Year of the Ocean, the Labor Opposition announced its marine conservation policies. These also promised marine parks to provide strict protection to areas of outstanding marine conservation significance.
- The State Strategic Plan for South Australia released earlier this year sets targets that further delay the establishment of Marine Protected Areas. The Plan's target date for implementing 19 'multiple-use' Marine Protected Areas is now 2010. This new timeline significantly changes the previous timelines, which were established after public consultation, prior to the release of the state government's draft marine parks policy in 2001.
- The targets proposed under the State Strategic Plan appear to have set internally within government, with little, to no consultation, with stakeholders previously engaged in the earlier Marine Protected Areas Task Force.
- The apparent lack of political will for implementing MPAs may be a result of a misconception that the general public is not in favour of Marine Parks or MPAs, or a fear of community backlash from recreational and or commercial fishing interests. This assumption may be misguided. The limited work that has been undertaken in South Australia would appear to suggest that there is often strong community support for Marine Parks.

Resources

- **There is an inadequate level of State resourcing to establish of MPAs.**
- This would appear to be the cause for the Sate Government's failure to meet budget targets with regards to Marine Protected areas, marine planning and marine species protection in the last three years. (see APPENDIX I A *Synopsis of Recent South Australian Government's Budget Indicators for Marine Planning and Marine Protected Areas*)
- **Need for Better Understanding of Marine Environments and Conservation within Agencies**
- There would appear to be an historic **lack of recognition or understanding of the value of marine protected areas in the higher levels of management** within government, which may also be a possible factor contributing to lack of progress in MPA establishment.
- Whilst the Department of Environment and Heritage has in more recent years contributed some resourcing to the establishment of the SARSMPA the levels of resourcing have been inadequate to implement marine conservation objectives.
- Historically there would appear to be a reticence to progress fisheries habitat and fisheries management objectives through marine protected areas within the fisheries portfolio.
- The lack or progress of in MPA policy development and its apparent lack of political acceptance would appear to have had marked consequences in the level of resourcing of MPA initiatives in this state.

State Resourcing of Marine Conservation Research and Industry focused marine research priorities

- Despite further commitments, under the current State Government's 'Living Coast Strategy', the funding allocated to the Strategy (apparently \$5 million over four years (0.5 million this year), which encompass a wide range of actions, would appear to be inadequate to accomplish the range of actions promised, including establishment of Marine Protected Areas.
- Historically the Commonwealth has contributed much of the funding for progressing MPAs within the state during the 1990.
- It is my understanding that much of this funding was reduced by the Commonwealth in response to the lack of on-ground progress in establishing Marine Protected Areas at the state level.
- There may also have been some loss of funding and research capacity when SARDI Aquatic Sciences made a number of changes to staff in the late 1990s with regards to the Environment and Biodiversity Unit.
- There may also be possible implications of the current cost recovery driven model for marine research in SA in delaying the necessary marine environment research necessary to meet marine conservation objectives.
- There may be possible influences of industry with regards to representation on funding and research bodies which could contribute to a possible preference of marine research projects focused upon industry needs as opposed to marine research for biodiversity conservation orientated outcomes.

Terms II, III & IV.

II. The current status of marine protected areas in South Australia with regard to mining and exploration activities and whether or not worlds best practice is being observed;

- **III. the identification of areas within the South Australian Representative Marine Protected Area estate in which mining and exploration activities are occurring or in which such activities may be permitted;**

IV. the identification and assessment of the options available to appropriately regulate mining and exploration in the South Australian Representative Marine Protected Area estate;

There are a range of potential impacts of mining on marine environments which are not compatible with marine conservation objectives. Mining activity within MPAs should not be considered in accord with world's best practice.

- In light of the South Australian Government ban of mining and exploration activities in the state waters of the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, **the allowance of extractive industrial activities within South Australia's marine conservation estate would appear highly incongruous.**
- As such mining and petroleum exploration activities should be banned in MPAs and that new MPAs should be declared as strictly protected reserves without mining rights.

As recognised by the Victorian Government's MPA process

"large multiple-use marine parks, in which fishing and harvesting and extractive uses are permitted in most of the zones, send confusing messages to the community about the purpose of the parks. In order that the purpose of the parks can be clearly communicated and the management regime simply explained and implemented, a system of highly protected marine national parks is proposed. Monitoring of the performance of the parks will also be simplified."

Environment Conservation Council (ECC) of Victoria

*"The idea of "multiple-use" land management has merit. Horse-riding in a pine plantation that is planted in the steep parts of a water catchment is a good example of sensible multiple-use. **However we must not forget that some land uses are incompatible.** Wilderness values and the long-term persistence and evolution of natural ecosystems are **NOT** compatible with human uses that modify habitat. These values need to be protected in strictly protected reserves. It is not just the size of a reserve system that counts, but also its quality and ability to comprehensively represent biodiversity and wilderness values."*

Professor Hugh Possingham (then of The University of Adelaide)

- If mining and petroleum exploration activities were to be allowed within MPAs then those activities must only proceed in accordance with a park or reserve management plan and in accordance with any future regional marine planning processes.
- There are concerns with regards to the specific wording of various clauses of Offshore Minerals, Petroleum (Submerged Lands) and Aquaculture legislation which would appear to give mining and these other industry activities superior rights over other interests regardless of their value, particularly conservation.

Term V. assessing the level of assistance being provided by the State Government to regional groups in the preparation of Natural Resource Management plans for marine protected areas;

- **There is a need for increased capacity of Natural Resource Management bodies to be able to better incorporate marine conservation and planning priorities within regions and seek to improve the ability for cross-regional marine conservation and management initiatives through such means as the State Natural Resource Management Strategy.**
- **The need for marine conservation expertise (not marine industry representation) on Natural Resource Management bodies** and advisory agencies must be recognised.
- Despite the apparent commitments to achieving marine and coastal targets under Natural Resource Management, in comparison with the previous decade of work under the Coast and Clean Seas

Memorandum of Understanding, **there would appear to have been a move away from marine and coastal integration under current NHT/NRM mechanisms.**

- Improved criteria need to be developed for regional NRM bodies to assess these plans for accreditation and incorporation into Regional NRM Plans.
- Inconsistencies between regions with regards to marine biodiversity conservation initiatives under NRM processes is in urgent need of redress to ensure greater linkages and a consistent approach to marine conservation and management across regions. This should certainly be an area of focus with regards to the development of a State NRM Strategy.
- Of concern is the hiatus which has occurred in the transition between the Natural Heritage Trust arrangements and the roll out of Natural Resource Management arrangements with regards to specialist coast and marine facilitators and programs dealing with marine and coastal communities, e.g. Coastcare, SeaNet and MCCN.
- With the restructure of funding into more generalised funding streams such as Envirofund there is still a need to ensure adequate levels of marine and coastal representation within state and regional assessment processes.
- Engaging volunteer support and subsequently maintaining motivation for involvement in management activities along the coast has taken concerted effort in the past. The break in momentum between NHT I and the Trust extension has been a major step backward for Coastcare and coast and marine projects. Further investigation is warranted to detail the effects of the transition upon local group productivity so that policy makers can see how their decisions translate on the ground.
- The MCCN notes that the level of (Federal) resourcing for the Marine and Coastal Community Network (and to some extent SeaNet) - one of the few national community extension programs dealing specifically with marine environments, has been severely reduced, diminishing the MCCN's capacity to effectively engage with the community on state and federal initiatives such as MPAs.

Term VI. The degree to which ecosystem based management principles are being incorporated in any plans for marine protected areas in the State;

- The regional marine planning approach being adopted by the SA government is a significant step towards Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM).
- It is reassuring to note the positive directions in which regional marine plans are being developed at state level.
- **Still of concern is the inadequacy of resourcing that has been allocated to the task and the protracted timeframes for establishment.**
- As the state has already committed to developing a marine planning framework with zoning for activities, **it is unclear why the State Government has also gone down the path of developing a series of multiple-use Marine Protected Areas as opposed to a system of highly-protected marine parks.**
- To progress an ecosystems-based management approach in South Australia there is a **need to better assess the impacts of the rapidly expanding aquaculture industry and its associated feed and fish meal industries** (which are reliant on small pelagic fish stocks in State, Commonwealth and other Nations waters) and **ensure that aquaculture planning and management are better integrated with marine planning and aquaculture planning takes proper heed of the need for conservation and protection of areas of high marine conservation value.**

Term VII. The need for new marine reserves legislation;

- Recognising **there may be a need for new legislation** to assist in the establishment of a Marine Protected Areas and Marine Planning in South Australia, **but that this must not delay the urgent need to progress the establishment of MPAs** and existing legislation is adequate and must be utilised in the interim.
- **There is a need to provide within the current and future legislation available for establishing MPAs, a simple and expedient process for the public nomination of areas as no-take MPAs,** (the New Zealand Marine Reserves Legislation provides a good model for this style of legislation, which in that country has been used by the Fishing Industry for MPA establishment.)
- Recognise that **duplication of legislative ability to establish MPAs may be useful** when establishing MPAs for objectives different to those of a Representative System and / or Marine Biodiversity Conservation - i.e. MPAs for fisheries management, tourism, maritime heritage, marine species protection, wilderness etc.
- In 1998 a number of Marine Areas were nominated under the existing Wilderness Protection Act. Given the SA Government's commitment to "Wildcountry - A Plan for Better Reserves and Habitats" to processing existing wilderness nominations; the Wilderness Advisory Committee should seek to progress the existing nominations for wilderness in marine areas that were nominated under the Wilderness Act in 1998 – there may be a need for marine conservation expertise to be coopted to the WAC.
- Given that the South Australian Marine Planning process is seeking to establish a zoned management approach to marine management, consideration should be given to **prioritising the establishment of a system of no-take marine national parks** for biodiversity conservation with adequate buffer distances from marine activities that may impact on those MPAs.
- **Seek to establish an adequately resourced authority** that can coordinate the implementation and management of a South Australian Representative System of Marine Protected areas for marine biodiversity conservation.
- **Review the buffer distances currently existing under current legislation** (i.e. Aquaculture Act) between marine industries (aquaculture, fisheries, mining) and MPAs and seek to increase these distances and establish such "buffer distances" where such regulation or legislation occurs or is unclear, to adequately protect marine habitat of high conservation value, marine protected areas and marine species of conservation concern.
- **There is a need for all Marine Protected Areas to have statutory plans of management** and that **public participation, including the marine conservation sector, is necessary in such management processes.**
- **Ensure that there is marine conservation expertise and representation on committees** established to manage or consult on management and /or planning of marine resources and marine protected areas.
- Recognise the **urgent need to progress the listing of Marine Species of Conservation Concern under current legislation** (such the conservation species of such species is identified they should be listed under both the existing Fisheries Act as protected species and under the National Parks and Wildlife Act under the appropriate schedules).
- **Adequately resource the Working Group on Marine Species of Conservation Concern to assess status of marine species in South Australian waters** (marine Algae and invertebrates and fish and sharks) and develop conservation measures and formal protection, including Threat Abatement plans, recovery plans and the establishment of Marine Reserves and Parks where necessary.

- Recognise the need to implement marine protected areas to achieve conservation and management for marine species of conservation concern, including marine flora, fish invertebrates, mammals and seabirds.
- Recognise that the **terminology used with regards to Marine Protected Areas is confusing and should be clarified** and that terms should be established to make clear the distinctions between MPAs established for different objectives and that 'no-take' MPAs be given a distinctive name to clarify the high level of protection associated with them.

Term VIII. Any other related matter

- **There is a need to recognise the need and urgency to establish a system of Marine Protected Areas.**
 - **Recognising the World Parks Congress's target of conserving 20 to 30% of the world's seas, the SA Government should set a similar target for establishment a representative system of marine protected areas for each of the State's recognised marine bioregions, ensuring that there are high levels of protection offered by the zoning and management.**
 - Recognise that research has highlighted that **recreational fishing may have comparable impacts on some fish stocks as commercial fisheries**, and considering the irregularities currently existing within the states aquatic reserves and marine parks which, in many cases still allow for the recreational killing and take of marine life, that **the removal of recreation fishing from Marine Protected Areas parks should be considered** and meet the specific objectives of those MPAs to adequately protect marine habitat and marine life.
 - Historically it would appear there has often been better dialogue and will to agree and progress principles for MPA establishment between the Fishing Industry and the conservation sector, than with government.
 - Whilst there is a need to engage with and consult with stakeholders in the establishment of marine protected areas, that Agencies recognise the need to work collaboratively with individuals and organisations that are advocates for marine conservation.
 - **The state government should further explore and be receptive to collaborative approaches to marine management and conservation with Conservation NGOs.**
 - The development of National Parks and Conservation lands on land provides key focuses for tourism experiences and marketing opportunities. Similarly Marine National Parks and reserves can provide a focus for marine and coastal tourism. Conservation of marine life within reserves can increase visitor experience.
 - National parks and other protected areas such as Marine Parks need to be recognized as major assets for tourism, both domestic and international. However, fully realising the value of these assets requires a careful balance between the protection and conservation of their natural and cultural values.
-