The Long and Winding Road: the development of a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative System of Highly Protected Marine Protected Areas in Victoria, Australia.

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<u>**Abstract**</u>

In 2002 the state of Victoria, Australia increased its "no-take' Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) 100 fold to cover over 5 % of its coastal waters in a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of marine national parks and sanctuaries. Given the ambitious targets set for MPA establishment globally in 2003 at the World Summit for Sustainable Development this apparently remarkable achievement could be an example to other nations and states attempting to establish substantial MPA systems.

This paper describes and discusses the factors which contributed to the establishment of the Victorian system and the relevance of these factors to other jurisdictions.

1.0   Introduction

At the World Park's Congress in Durban, South Africa in October 2003 the percentage of land reserved in Protected Areas was reported to be approximately 11.5% of the Earth's total land area [1]. The percentage of sea in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) was reported to be less than 0.5 % of the world's oceans [2.]. MPAs made up less than 10 % of all protected areas, despite the oceans occupying 71 % of the planet. This was described as unfortunate. There had been very little increase in reservation of MPAs since the previous Congress in Caracas in 1992 where a target of 20 % of the oceans being protected in MPAs by 2002 was set [3].

The failure to get anywhere near the target was despite considerable efforts at publishing the extent of MPAs in the interim (eg. [4, 5]) providing guidelines for their establishment (eg.[6]), publicising their role in biodiversity conservation (eg. [7, 8, 9, 10]) and encouraging their selection, declaration, design and management (eg. [11; 12 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20, 21]) .

This modest achievement of 0.5 % when aiming at 20 % makes the target set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 of a global representative system of MPAs by 2010 [22] a very ambitious one indeed. Possibly the first International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC) to be held in Geelong, Victoria, Australia in October 2005 hosted by the International Union for the

Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and Parks Victoria (PV) will accelerate progress.

Nevertheless the literature quoted above concentrates on guidelines for the establishment of MPAs and management and planning of MPAs once in existence. There is very little literature documenting successful examples of how the declaration of actual MPAs was achieved as models for nations and regions attempting to meet the ambitious MPA targets. There are papers (eg. [23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28]) on community engagement in MPA programs and monitoring which highlight some of the community concerns (often from fishing interests) which may have inhibited the declaration of substantial MPAs but fewer references on general community attitudes (eg.[29]).

In conclusion the literature is composed of substantial work on the design, planning and management of MPAs and reports on how MPAs that are in existence are actually performing. There are some papers on consultation processes, particularly as to engaging the, usually anti-MPA, fishing fraternity post MPA establishment but very few on examples of successful declarations of MPAs as models for the huge increase in MPAs that is necessary if the latest target from WSSD is to be met.

Against these disappointing achievements the increase in MPAs in the south-eastern Australian State of Victoria is startling. Victoria possesses 2,000 kilometres of south facing coastline with temperate waters off the coast supporting substantial endemic populations of flora and fauna Victoria has been able to report that it had declared in November 2002 over 5 % of its coastal waters as high level protection (i.e. so called 'no-

take' reserves) marine national parks and marine sanctuaries in a comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) sample of its marine habitats [30]. This was a five hundred fold increase in highly protected areas in one piece of legislation.

How did this occur? Were there unique factors operating in Victoria? Are there lessons from the Victorian experience which may be valuable to other nations and states attempting to substantially increase their Marine Protected Area (MPAs) systems?

This paper will attempt to answer these questions

As with all such success stories the realities of the achievement are not necessarily as spectacular as would first appear. The Victorian story starts in May 1982 when the Government of the State of Victoria committed itself to the establishment of a comprehensive and representative set of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Victoria's coastal waters. Twenty years later in May 2002 Victoria possessed a mosaic of eight multiple-use MPAs almost randomly placed along the coastline as well as 14 intertidal extensions of terrestrial national, state and coastal parks. The total area of MPAs covered less than 0.05% of State coastal waters with less than 0.01% being in "high protection" [31] or what are commonly referred to as "no take" MPAs.

But by November 2002 the Government of Victoria had proclaimed 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine Sanctuaries, all high protection reserves covering 5.3% of Victoria's coastal waters. This paper attempts to discuss the reasons behind this sudden increase in area after twenty years of very slow progress. The approach taken is to describe the chronology of the development of Victoria's MPA system from the date of the declaration of the first MPA in 1979 through to the declaration of the suite of "no-take" MPAs in November 2002. From this description a series of observations on factors

which may have influenced the process (both negatively and positively) and other characteristic features, or themes, which developed over the twenty year period, will be described. Finally these factors, features and themes will be reviewed to isolate which had the most significant impact on the successful development of the MPA system in Victoria, Australia. These factors may be of value to other nations, states or provinces who have found it difficult to establish MPAs, particularly high protection or temperate water MPAs, in their own jurisdiction.

Before proceeding a few definitions are necessary. In this paper a Marine Protected Area is defined as : "any area of intertidal or sub tidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora and fauna, historical and cultural features, which has been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment" [32]. A highly protected MPA is defined as a MPA which is classified as either Category I or II in the IUCN system [33]. Often a short hand notation of 'no-take' is used to describe most such MPAs as usually there is a ban on all forms of extraction of living resources (eg. fishing) and most often gas, oil and minerals.

Finally a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) system of MPAs is described as a system which protects a full range of habitats and communities in each region (comprehensive), with boundaries established for the MPA which ensure a sufficient size and are practical enough to minimise external negative influences (adequate) and which reflects within the boundaries the diversity of flora and fauna in the protected habitats and communities (representativeness) [34].

2.0   Background

2.1. Australia's Marine Protected Area System.

Australia possesses one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) in the world [35] – at least 11 million square kilometres with the sea area being twice the size of Australia's substantial land area. Under the Australian Constitution the Commonwealth or national Government has responsibilities for the vast majority of this sea area but the State and Territory Governments retain control over most coastal waters (usually defined as extending out to three nautical miles from the coastline [36, 37].

The development of MPAs in Australia has had as its basis the work of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). In particular pioneering work by various authors eg. Eg. [38, 39, 40, 41, 42 43]), the Fourth Fenner Environment Conference 1991 in Canberra ([44] and see particularly [45, 46 47 and 48]) laid a solid base for the program described below. Policy aspects have also been described by various authors [49, 50 and 51] with a recent overview being produced by Edyvane and Lockwood [52]

Some of these initiatives have received Government assistance and there has been a substantial Government initiatives as well eg. An early inventory of MPAs in Australia [53] a State of the Marine Environment Report [54] which included details of MPAs in an annexe report [55] and government policy documents including a bioregionalisation system [56] and an action plan and guidelines [57].

The Commonwealth's MPA Program [58] is being developed in co-operation with the State and Territory Governments in Australia as part of the (Australian) National Representative System of MPAs (NRSMPA). The primary goal of the NRSMPA is to

build a system of MPAs which is comprehensive (covering all ecosystems present in Australian waters), adequate (the size and nature of the system maintains the integrity of ecological processes) and representative (the individual MPAs reflect the habitats they represent). The acronym to summarise this approach is "CAR".

Further details of the NRSMPA can be found in the strategic plan of action (including guidelines for establishing the NRSMPA) produced by the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council [59] (ANZECC – was the Council of State, Territory and National Ministers concerned with environment and conservation matters). This plan sets out a series of priority actions within a national and international context as well as describing the then current status of the NRSMPA, including the use of the Interim Marine and Coastal Regionalisation for Australia (IMCRA) as the bioregional framework for locating the MPAs in the CAR system.

In 1999 of the 60 Australian (IMCRA) bioregions 21 bioregions had no MPAS, 21 had MPAS covering less than 1 % and five had between 1 and 10 % coverage i.e. Two thirds of the bioregions had less than 1 % of their area in MPAs. The plan also showed that the States and Territories all had policies concerned with establishing MPAs at various levels of development. In terms of the type (the degree of protection afforded by MPAs) the plan states "The NRSMPA will aim to include some highly protected areas (IUCN Categories I and II) in each bioregion" [60]. Cresswell and Thomas [61] have reported the extent and type of MPAs in Australia.

Since the plan was prepared the Commonwealth Government has declared in the waters under its jurisdiction, five new MPAs (most between 1999 and 2002). There is no reliable assessment of the performance of the States and Territories but outside the Great

Barrier Reef Marine Park, which has substantially increased its high protection areas (but not the overall size of the MPA), there has been very few new MPAs created. Hence the NRSMPA appears to have led to a immediate increase in Commonwealth MPAs but this has not been sustained and has not resulted in substantial increases in State declarations (with the exception of Victoria).

In total in 2002 there were 192 MPAs (with 17 different names) in Australian waters covering approximately 64 million hectares [62]

In summary Australia has achieved substantial progress in MPA declaration when compared to global achievements and is recognised as a world leader in MPA development. This progress though is not uniform across the nation (State and Territory performance in coastal waters, where pressures are greatest [63] has been patchy and mediocre at best) or across the major bioregions in the EEZ. There has been an expectation that the implementation of Australia's Oceans Policy [64, 65; 66; 67] through Regional Marine Plans will see a more CAR system of MPAs form. But after four years of preparing the first RMP for south eastern Australia [68] not one single additional MPA has been declared in this region's Commonwealth controlled waters. In part these generally positive achievements may be related to the emphasis in Australian literature on how to develop a MPAs system in contrast to the global literature which tends to concentrate on post declaration planning and management. The leadership role of the NGO sector and the GBRMPA have also been telling factors although MPA increases have been strongly opposed by the fishing and mining sectors in Australia as elsewhere.

2.2. <u>**Victorian Coastal Waters and Victoria's MPA System**</u>

The Victorian coastline is approximately 2,000 kilometre long and is composed of a spectacular mix of cliffs, bluffs, sand dunes and embayments. [69, 70 71, 72, 73].

The Victorian State Government has jurisdiction over the coastal waters off the Victorian coastline out to three nautical miles under the Australian Offshore Constitutional Settlement (OCS, [74]), although there is mutual management with the Federal Australian Government of some fisheries and some oil and gas exploration operations in shore of this limit. Hence in terms of marine waters the Victorian Government has control of approximately 8,000 square kilometres of sea [75].

Within these cool temperate waters the tides are diurnal and the predominantly south facing coastline is subject in the west of the state to predominantly south west swells and in the eastern portions to south eastern swells. The combination of the tides , swell, strong winds, mainly from the south and west, and the narrow and shallow Bass Strait means the waters can be very rough. When the differing influences of the Eastern Australian Current (bringing warmer waters along the eastern side of the state) and the cooler waters on the west coast are combined the result is a distinctive mix of habitats leading to a very significant level of endemism amongst plants and animals, in many taxa at a level over 70 %.

The Interim Marine and Coastal Regionalisation for Australia Technical Group [76] identified five distinct bioregions in Victoria summarised by two authors [77 and 78] with more detailed descriptions reported by others [79, 80 and 81]. Therefore Victorian Coastal Waters are essentially cool temperate in character with significant local variation

arising from an interaction of substrate type, exposure to winds and tides, and water temperature.

The next section will describe the development of Victoria's MPA system in detail but in 1992, prior to the commencement of the major study intended to expand Victoria's MPA system Victoria possessed 12 MPAs covering a total of approximately 50,000 ha., with all but a few hectares in multiple use MPAs where fishing, exploration, mining and discharges from land were still permitted [82]. Traill and Porter [83] reported that in 2001 there were 11 MPAS (consolidation of MPAs had decreased there overall number) covering a total of 53,501 ha or approximately 4.5 % of Victorian coastal waters (VCW). Only 600ha or 0.05% of VCW was in highly protected MPAs spread across five MPAs. There have been few studies on the use of these reserves (eg. [84, 85, 86]) although various draft and final management plans give some background information (eg. [87, 88, 89])

3.0   The Development of Marine Protected Areas in Victoria

Table 1 summarises the major events leading to the declaration of Victoria's comprehensive, adequate and representative (CAR) system of highly protected MPAs in November 2002 (a more detailed table is available from the author)

Insert Table 1 here.

Whilst not proceeding with a detailed description of each of these events it is possible to identify, and briefly comment on four distinct phases in this sequence of events.

3.1 Prior to the first Government Commitment to an MPA system (pre-1982)

Prior to the Cain Labor Government being elected in 1982 with a commitment to the establishment of an MPA system one MPA (the Harold Holt Marine Reserve at the heads of Port Phillip Bay) had been declared in 1978 [114, 115]. In this regard the Victorian development of MPAs was similar up until to 1982 to other jurisdictions i.e. a specific MPA was proposed and fought for against the combined opposition of state wide fishing and other interest groups. In Victoria the groups promoting MPAs were the Australian Marine Science Association (AMSA) and the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA). After this early declaration there was not even a second site under active consideration for four more years.

3.2.: The 'fits and starts' Phase (1982 to 1991)

After the commitment to a MPA system by the newly elected Government in 1982 the Government's public land (and sea) use advisory body, the Land Conservation Council (LCC, later re-named the Environment Conservation Council, ECC) hastily inserted in its first set of Draft Recommendations a reference to consideration of the declaration of Marine Protected Areas in its final recommendations for the area of South Gippsland including the waters of the iconic Wilsons Promontory National Park (first declared as a national park in 1898).

The subsequent final recommendations of several MPAs only six months later (late 1982) shocked the local community and started the implementation of the Government's MPA policy off in a haphazard and controversial manner which probably

worked against the long term success of the policy overall. It was five years between the declaration of Harold Holt MPA (1978) and the South Gippsland MPAs (1983).

The strength of local opposition led again to a long delay before the next proposed MPA was forthcoming i.e. five years until the Bunurong MPA in the late 1980s. This delay and uncertainty may have been avoided if the Government had instructed the LCC to carry out a marine and coastal investigation covering the whole coastal area instead of continuing to look at MPAs only when the LCC's schedule of going from land region to land region happened to take in a coastal area.

Finally after the author had documented the numerous promises of the Government to initiate a full LCC study the Government, just prior to being defeated in an election, finally instructed the LCC to commence the study in 1991.

3.3.: The Land Conservation Council's Marine and Coastal Study (1992 to 2000)

By the 1991 initiation of the LCC study it was five years since the last MPA had been declared in Victoria. As it turned out it was going to be eleven years before the next MPA was declared. The LCC managed to produce a descriptive report of the marine and coastal areas of Victoria relatively quickly [116] but a combination of considerable opposition to any MPAs, a lack of interest shown by members of the general public (as distinct from the specific sectoral interests) and a lack of detailed knowledge of the marine environment resulted in a prolonged period between descriptive reports and recommendations and considerable controversy over the performance of the LCC itself. So much controversy in fact that it is believed that one set of marine recommendations were actually shredded just prior to the LCC being suddenly disbanded and replaced by

the Environment Conservation Council (ECC) in 1997. The ECC then had to re-create the momentum and did produce its recommendations in a comparative short period of time producing its final recommendations in late 2000.

3.4.: The Realisation of a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative MPA system (2000 to 2002).

The final phase was purely political. The independent body (LCC/ECC) had produced its recommendations after considerable public consultation and now it was up to the Government to accept, reject or modify those recommendations. As Table 1 shows the Government (which was a minority Government of the same party that had commenced the MPA saga 20 years earlier) needed the support of independents in the lower house of parliament to pass the MPA legislation. The Government attempted to introduce a modified version of the recommendations – deleting one national park and one marine sanctuary in an attempt to pacify the opposition of specific recreation and commercial fishing groups. After accusations of manipulating the LCC/ECC recommendations and pandering to pressure groups the Government withdrew the legislation in mid 2001 when it realised neither the independents nor the opposition would support the legislation.

Due to a series of important actions discussed in more details below the legislation was re-introduced a year later (with the deleted national park and sanctuary re-instated and a substantial compensation package for people adversely affected by the declarations added) and the legislation was passed with the support of the independents and the major Opposition party in mid 2002, giving Victoria its current MPA system.

4.0   Matters which influenced the successful establishment of Victoria's

Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative Highly Protected MPA system

Table 1 highlights a number of themes, or factors, that influenced the final

outcome of a CAR system of 'no-take' MPAs in Victoria. These themes are grouped and

discussed below under a series of headings starting with the stakeholders involved in the

long drawn out debate, followed by the key issues that were debated and finally with

elements of the decision-making process which seemed decisive in the eventual

successful achievement of the suite of MPAs.

4.1 The Stakeholders.

The various stakeholders groups, starting with the Non-Government

Organisations (NGOs) can be assembled according to whether they were in favour or

opposed to a CAR system of 'no-take' reserves.

The Conservation Groups.

A key element of success was the presence of a NGO with a long-term

commitment to MPAs and the resources to maintain that commitment.

In the Victorian case the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) performed

this role, later joined by the Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) from

1993. The VNPAs support for MPAs never wavered over 25 years and this was critically

important as other groups and individuals came and went. This allowed continuity of

knowledge and "cultural memory" so that when a new phase was entered the VNPA

could use the accumulated experience and knowledge of the past. The VNPA and MCCN

were supported in their efforts throughout the 1990s by the two key national bodies the

Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and the Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS), although these organisations commitments waxed and waned according to the personnel involved at a particular stage.

A key element of the pro-MPA campaign was the support of local groups along the coastline in regional areas. These groups with local knowledge complimented the state groups' overall vision and were important in countering any view that it was a Melbourne (capital city) urban driven proposal imposing 'big city' views on regional communities.

The Major Opponents of MPAs.

Lined up in continuous opposition to both the CAR system and to any individual proposal were, in particular, the peak State bodies representing commercial and recreational fishers. Local fishing groups were opposed to local MPA proposals and their opposition from the beginning to the end of the debate was completely fixed and immovables as they perceived that their 'favourite fishing spots' were threatened.

A feature of the MPA debate was the rigidity of the stance of these two sets of fishing NGOs through to the mid 1990s when the peak state fishing bodies began to show signs of greater flexibility, possibly as they realised that some form of a MPA system was inevitable under either of the major political parties.

Neutral Groups.

Other sectoral interests eg. Tourist operators, dive groups etc. were fairly neutral (even disinterested) in the debate until in the late 1990s when they were actively courted by both sides of the debate. By the end stages these groups became mild supporters of the CAR system and this "winning over" of neutral groups was a telling factor in final political acceptance of the system.

Political Parties: Governments and Oppositions.

A crucial element of the debate was the support, in the end, of both the major political parties (Labor and Liberal) for the CAR "no-take" system. The third party represented in the parliament the ultra conservative farmer based party (Nationals) was opposed throughout. The cross party political support was crucial in the end and was sparked by the extraordinary letter to 'The Age' newspaper in favour of the MPAs, authored by an ex-Liberal and ex-Labor Premier (leader) in April 2002.

As well the Premier the head of the State Government) and the Minister were active "champions" of the CAR proposal in its final stages which gave considerable weight to the concept. Finally both political parties clearly wanted "closure" on this issue by 2002 – it had gone on far too long and was beginning to "crowd out" other policies.

Bureaucrats and Government Agencies.

Key bureaucrats (eg. Heads of sections) particularly in the State Environment Department supported the CAR proposals throughout and were influential in maintaining

the momentum behind the debate. This support though was not confined to park and conservation agencies but covered other disciplines and aided the campaign.

The role of the Victorian Coastal Council (VCC), the peak coastal agency in Victoria, in actively promoting the CAR system in drafts of the statutory Victorian Coastal Strategy and then finally in organising the MPA breakfast of key decision makers in Melbourne lent a strong credibility to the CAR proposal. Here was an independent agency, the government's lead coastal agency, publicly declaring that a CAR system of MPAs was a critical element of sustainable use of the Victorian coast.

The Cumulative Weight of Stakeholder Support.

In the end the synergistic affect of so many diverse stakeholders supporting a common system over a protracted period of time was a very strong influence on success. An indicator of this is to analyse the recipients of the awards made by Parks Victoria in March 2003 to those who contributed to the successful CAR outcome. There were 27 awards given to 12 individuals and 15 groups/organisations ranging from local groups, state-wide conservation groups, government agencies, members of parliament and scientists. The sheer number and diversity of individuals and groups involved finally won success.

4.2. The Key Issues in the Debate.

There were a number of issues debated that were crucial to the success of the campaign.

The Role of Science in the Public Debate

Science was used as a tool to discuss key matters such as the need (or otherwise) for MPAs, whether MPAs would meet the biodiversity objectives set and where to place the actual MPAs in terms of habitats and other features.

The Role of "Experts".

During the debate a series of international scientists and experts were sponsored to visit Victoria in support of MPAs, most notably Dr Sylvia Earle (USA), Prof. David Bellamy(UK) and Dr Bill Ballantine (New Zealand). These people briefed Cabinet Ministers and also addressed public meetings, small gatherings and received considerable media coverage. This seemed to set a global context to the debate and placed the Victorian proposals relative to overseas developments. The State politicians in particular were taken by the notion that the CAR proposal was unusual if not unique. (see also the role of "champions' under section 4.3)

The Stated Role/ Objectives of a MPA system.

As the debate progressed discussions of the objectives of a CAR MPA system came to the forefront. The conservation groups and supporters saw the primary role was of biodiversity conservation whilst some of the opponents of a 'no-take' MPA system saw MPAs as solely another fisheries management tool. This issue confused the discussion of 'no-take' verse multiple use MPAs. The groups who believed the sole, or main role, for declaring MPAs was to enhance fisheries could not see the need for 'no-take' MPAs whilst those arguing for a primary objective of biodiversity conservation

could not see the value of multiple use MPAs. Hence the debate was polarised along sectoral lines even after there was general acknowledgment of the need for MPAs.

Finally the role in Australia of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) and the GBRMP Authority (GBRMPA) needs a brief airing. The GBRMP has been promoted (globally) as the quintessential MPA. Yet in reality the greater Marine Park prohibits nothing but oil and gas exploration and is more a zoning scheme than a "conservation park". For example until July 2004 less than 5 % of the entire massive GBRMP was 'no-take'. Early in the Victorian debate the GBRMP played a negative role for proponents of MPAs in Victoria. Fishers and others ill informed about the reality of the GBRMP feared the whole state's coastal waters would become a Marine Park (not realising this would have very little impact on them) and used the sheer size of the GBRMP as an argument (or "scare-tactic") against the Victorian proposals. As well the GBRMPA's promotion of MPA was focussed overseas and the Authority did not lend any assistance to Victorians arguing for a MPA system. But a very positive role of the GBRMP was that it encouraged interstate rivalry – a major motivator of State Governments in Australia. Victorian proponents of a CAR MPA system could point out the size of the GBRMP in Queensland and the 5 % 'no-take' area and say Victoria needed to match this. This had a positive influence on the final outcome. (As an aside interestingly enough shortly after Victoria declared a greater proportion of its coastal waters as 'no-take' than in the GBRMP; the GBRMP, after 20 years of no change, moved to increase its "no-take" area to over 30 %!)

The Role of Valuable Fisheries.

The major generators of actual dollars in the Victorian fishery is abalone and rock lobster rather than fin-fish production. These less mobile species hence became crucial to the debate in terms of loss of harvesting area and compensation that may be paid, as well as the risk of over exploiting these species. Once the decision making bodies were able to define the MPA boundaries to minimise impact on these financially important fisheries a considerable amount of opposition was dissipated.

Flexibility and Rigidity in Negotiating Positions.

The early years of the debate were highlighted by the rigidity of the positions adopted by opposing parties: large 'no-take' parks verse no MPAs at all.

In the latter period (particularly the last five years) groups which had held rigid inflexible positions slowly lost their negotiating powers (with one exception, see below) to those willing to compromise. Some of the compromises made included conservationists/ politicians responding to the concern that ordinary recreational fishers would lose out by losing their favourite fishing locations. The Government responded by excluding all piers and jetties from 'no-take' MPAs in the last year of the debate. The argument that the MPAs would be 'paper parks' only and subject to large scale poaching garnered the Government response that increased the enforcement aspects of the final package. The argument that that MPAs would result in loss of   commercial fishers income received the response that the compensation package would be increased.

The one hard-line group which remained rigid, and was successful in minimising the size of the Corner Inlet Marine National Park, were the commercial fishers of Corner Inlet who had opposed the original multiple use MPAs in South Gippsland from 1982.

Their "victory" is likely to be a pyrrhic one as over-fishing and pollution has decreased the catch over the last 20 years and the lack of a viable MPA in the area is likely to worsen this position.

The Importance of Strong Existing Institutional Arrangements and Cultural Features in Resolving Conflict.

Victorians' beach culture and love of the coast [117] which is reflected in the retention in public ownership of over 90% of the Victorian coastline (by legislation in 1878) meant that the community was always going to be partial to conservation measures on the coast.

The strong institutional arrangements for protecting the coast and coastal waters in Victoria eg. A lead agency, the Victorian Coastal Council, a Coastal Management Act 1995, a statutory Victorian Coastal Strategy and over 60 % of coastal land under the National Parks Act [118,119] meant that any MPA system would sit in a strong institutional base.

The independent body (the Land Conservation Council later Environment Conservation Council) that ran the public consultation process and made the final recommendations of a CAR system to the State Government had a 30 year history of resolving public resource allocation issues in Victoria. Its integrity and independence was well established. Arguing against MPAs on the basis that the consultation process (which was institutionalised after 30 years of LCC /ECC practice) was inadequate in the end proved counter productive. The historical data said the opposite.

Persistence.

The long term nature of the debate meant that persistence, by individuals and groups, was critical to success. In the end it took 20 years from the time there was a political commitment by a major party to a MPA system until it was realised. It took ten of those years just to get the Government who made the commitment to a comprehensive marine and coastal study to commence the study! It is impossible to underestimate the role that this dogged persistence in the face of set backs played in ultimate success.

4.3 Critical Elements associated with the Decision-making Process.

General

The LCC / ECC public consultation process had been used on more than twenty occasions in the past so the process itself was relative robust. The LCC/ECC's recommendations had been largely accepted by Governments over a 30 year period as well. The Marine and Coastal Study consultation process had survived two changes of Government - hence three Governments - and hence the Government and Opposition had "ownership" of the process and were confident of the general community's (as distinct from the active participants in the debate) confidence in the process and were duty bound to respect the ECC's recommendations. The community also had an expectation that 10 years with the LCC/ECC process would produce a result. All of these realities meant that the recommended system of MPAs had a strong chance of being implemented.

The Lobbying Campaign of Conservation NGOs.

This item was also discussed under stakeholders (above) but some of the techniques adopted by proponents were : regular meetings to update politicians and the media on progress, the use of local as well as State wide groups in lobbying local politicians as well as Ministers and opposition spokespeople respectively, telephone calls from local constituents to their local members of parliament across the State and the use of email campaigns to politicians at a time when this method had been little used in the past.

The 'media-savvy' of key individuals was crucial for success of the campaign by proponents. In particular the work of Tim Allen of the MCCN and Chris Smyth of the VNPA, both individuals with a long history in networking, campaigning and advocacy work with the media, and in cultivating key media outlets and reporters, was crucial to the final success.

The Use of "Champions" by the Proponents:

Proponents developed a range of individuals and groups to "champion" the proposed CAR MPA system. These ranged from international experts (see above) to key scientists and academics in Victoria and significant bureaucrats and agencies. This meant that the message the public received about MPAs came from different people from different backgrounds and hence raised the probability of the community hearing the message from someone they admired or trusted. The term "trusted messengers" was used to describe these individuals.

A Communication and Education Strategy run in Parallel to the Political campaign.

A key element of the proponents' campaign, particular from the Marine and Coastal Community Network point of view was to back up the actual campaign for a CAR MPA system with a more general consciousness-raising education program. This educational program did not carry advocacy messages but rather raised people's awareness of the beauty, splendour and uniqueness of the southern temperate marine environment of Victoria. There were a suite of colour marine posters produced on off shore habitats with familiar names intertwined eg. Kelp <u>Forests</u>, Sponge <u>Gardens</u>, Seagrass <u>Meadows</u> (author's emphasis) and a series of posters on local habitats and charismatic fauna (eg. Sea Dragons, Seals, Dolphins, Blue Whales) published in the Sunday newspapers. National icons in Victoria were exploited eg. the Great Ocean Road (a scenic highway along the coastline), the Twelve Apostles (a magnificent series of limestone stacks off the south west coast) as well.

Focus groups were used to guide the development of these media messages, packages and the terminology used in the discussions. For example the use of the term 'no-take' instead of "highly protected MPAs", the use of 'national park' for large MPAs and the ditching of painful and unhelpful discussion on the differences between marine reserves, marine parks, MPAs, marine sanctuaries, fisheries reserves etc.

The added benefit of this approach was it also raised the community's capacity to understand and plan and manage these marine and coastal areas in the future (one reason for the engagement and adoption of MPAs by coastal agencies as well).

"Crash Through or Crash" Approach.

From the beginning of the debate on MPAs in 1982 to its end in 2002 the conservationists (individuals and groups) steadfastly maintained that the CAR system had to be of 'no-take' reserves for reasons of marine biodiversity conservation. It would have been an easy path to take to compromise to a multiple use system and this was the route the Government initially took in the late 1980s in South Gippsland and the early recommendations of the LCC in the early 1990s. But even when the legislation to establish the system was withdrawn in 2001 proponents did not lessen their commitment to the full CAR 'no-take' system. The outcome justified this stance.

Significant "Break-Through" events.

There were a number of key events which changed the momentum of the debate at critical times. The most significant of these are described below.

The final 'shaming' of the Labor Government in 1991 into actually starting the study which it had committed itself prior to election in 1982 (a comprehensive study of the coastal waters of Victoria in order to develop a system of MPAs). The author had compiled a three page list of over 15 separate statements or commitments, by the Government or its agencies, to carry out the study between 1982 and 1991 and widely circulated it to politicians, the media and influential people.

Another was the decision by the VNPA, after market research, to use the term "National Park" in the campaign. This had been suggested earlier in a National Parks Advisory Council Annual report but had not gained any "traction". The use of Marine National Park as a title for large 'no-take' MPAs seemed to strike a chord with the

general community who appreciated and supported national parks on land (Victoria increased its terrestrial National Parks 14 fold between 1970 and 1995, [120]). This change in terminology seemed to 'kick' the campaign on at a stage when some momentum had been lost.

The other three events occurred after the initial legislation had been introduced and then withdrawn from Parliament in mid 2001. It was quite possible that this huge blow to the NGOs campaigns for a CAR system of MPAs could have ended the campaign. Instead the events helped regain the momentum.

The VNPA called a de-briefing/ counselling / "post-mortem" session of the people who had been active in the campaign (the author attended) shortly after the parliamentary debacle. An independent facilitator took participants through a series of exercises emphasising the positives (eg. increase awareness of marine conservation) that had come out of the campaign. This re-vitalised demoralised campaigners and most left the session in a re-invigorated and determined state of mind, ready to resume the campaign immediately.

A second critical factor was the joint letter from two former Premiers, (elder statesmen) of the two major parties, supporting the MPAs. This caused both major parties to re-consider their positions and removed partisan political opportunism from the debate. Both parties went on to support the legislation.

Finally the VCC organised an "influential peoples" breakfast. The invitation list was of major decision makers from industry, unions, public affairs etc from across Victoria and was held in the prestigious and historic Melbourne Town Hall. The vast majority of

people invited had no prior knowledge of MPAs and little knowledge of Victoria's

marine environment. A knowledgeable person was placed at each table and over

breakfast people were entertained with films of the proposed marine parks and the

wonders of the Victorian marine environment. International speakers reinforced the value

of MPAs and each guest received a CD with the marine images on departure. The impact

of such an event is hard to measure but the response of the guests was invariably

favourable and presumably they informed their influential circles of what they had

witnessed. Certainly there was an increase in interest from people not previously

involved in the debate in the weeks following the breakfast.

5.0 Lessons from the Victorian Experience for other States and Nations attempting to enhance their MPAs Systems.

Specific lessons acquired   from the Victorian experience have elements which were

particular to Victoria and Australia's jurisdictional and cultural system. But there are also

lessons of more general applicability for other nations and states to take from Victoria's

experience. Below these lessons are grouped under a series of headings.

5.1. Tactics and Strategies.

Persistence

Don't give up. There clearly is no substitute for persistence. Over 20 years of

effort in Victoria yielded an entire MPA system even when all appeared lost after 19

years of work.

"Crash through or Crash"

There are clear benefits for pursuing an "all or none" strategy for creating a CAR system of MPAs. Of the many attempts made in Victoria to obtain a highly-protected MPA system it was the most comprehensive and most ambitious that proved successful, i.e. One which was for all "no-take" reserves and was for an entire suite, or system, of MPAs in one declaration.

The previous modest attempts at gaining one MPA "here" and a little later another MPA 'there" meant that each and every proposal was weakened (either by a decrease in the degree of protection, or a decrease in area) before declaration.

Historically the area by area (incremental) approach meant that there was little state-wide support for a localised proposal but that those opposed to MPA declaration were able to focus all their state-wide and local resources to oppose each proposed MPA in turn, i.e. each proposal was "picked off" and weakened. By proposing an entire suite of MPAs simultaneously state-wide support was garnered for the MPAs but opposition now had to work against a whole range of proposals simultaneously. The better organised state based conservation organisation were able to carry a central campaign direct to the parliament, politicians and decision makers based in the capital city , Melbourne, where over 75 % of the state populations lives. Conversely the 'anti' campaign became fragmented when confronted with 24 "battlefronts" simultaneously.

Also the argument of the "thin end of the wedge" was not as easy to carry in a CAR system proposal. Whilst when a single reserve was proposed in a local area opponents could argue that their favourite fishing spot was to be removed and the MPA was to cover say 15 – 20 % of their local area – hence making "scare" tactics easier - it

was impossible to argue that a reserve system that covered 5 % of the sate (and no piers, jetties or heavily frequented beach fishing locations) leaving 95 % of coastal waters available for fishing was a threat to the existence of recreational and commercial fishing. A five percent reservation could not be portrayed "as locking up the state's waters".

Know who your Target Audience is.

A clear lesson from the Victorian experience is to distinguish clearly between the "closed mind" opponents , who would, and will, oppose MPAs (particularly 'no-take' ones) irrespective of analysis (that is the recalcitrant opponents) from the 'open-minded' members of the general community.

The Victorian experience suggests you aim all messages at the "open-minded" group. You counter the objections of the "closed mind" group in an open and generous fashion i.e. you appeal over this recalcitrant group to the open and fair minded members of the general community. Appearing generous and conciliatory (willing to compromise and discuss issues) will not only counteract the negativity of these opponents but will portray you in the general community's mind as reasonable and caring, even about your strident opponents.

5.2. Communications and Education.

KISS: Keep It Simple Stupid

Opposition groups were able to "muddy the waters" by arguing that maybe you could have "no take" areas if it was proved they were valuable for enhancing fishing stocks. i.e. by creating confusion over the reasons for declaration of "no take" reserves.

The conservation groups and scientists groups argued the reason for reserve declaration was always biodiversity conservation.

So whilst sustainable fisheries is one desirable objective for establishing MPAs it is certainly not the only reason and is usually not even the primary reason. When reviewing the 'grey literature' associated with this issue (mainly pamphlets, newsletters etc. of the various stakeholders) a detectable if not quantifiable trend was apparent: the message of the advocates (eg. VNPA and MCCN) became shorter, sharper and simpler as the campaign continued. In early calls to supporters to make submissions several pages (often somewhat rambling) were used. By the last stages (2001/2) the messages were crisp and precise.

Education in Parallel, and Integrated with Lobbying.

Actions which broaden the support base for MPA establishment beyond traditional supporters (environmentalists) and across established set sector and partisan political boundaries to a diverse community base proved very effective.

The value of any approach which overcomes the public's lack of knowledge and understanding of the marine environment and the role of MPAs (eg. In Victoria the use of the well-understood and well appreciated title "national park") appeared to substantially increase support for the MPA system in the broader community.

In addition the importance of laying down over sometime a "foundation" for an eventual MPA system should not be underestimated. This "foundation" is in terms of the information base on the marine environment, some actual MPAs and building the capacity of individuals and groups capable of refining the communication of advantages

of an MPA system to politicians and the general community. It would appear unlikely

that without the capacity building of individuals and institutions over the period from

1978 through to the late 1990s that the "sudden" declaration of an entire suite of MPAs

would have been possible.

In Victoria a conservation battle over the conservation of a desert area in 1969 -

1970 (121) was the watershed for a period of huge public support for parks and a massive

declaration of terrestrial national parks (122) which saw a fourteen fold increase to the

current reserve system (which covers nearly 15 % of the State's land area). The 2002

marine park declarations may well herald a similar increase in marine parks over the next

quarter of a century.

Identify and Use "Champions".

In the Victorian case study a series of "champions" arose over time. These ranged

from individuals with international standing (notably Dr Sylvia Earle, Prof. David

Bellamy and Dr Bill Ballantine) through organisations (notably the Victorian National

Parks Association, the Marine and Coastal Community Network and the Victorian

Coastal Council) to individuals with the final (successful) campaign (most notably Tim

Allen and Chris Smyth).

The use of international "experts" and others to register in decision-makers'

minds the significance (in international and national terms) of MPAs and of any proposal

for a comprehensive and representative suite of high protection reserves was a decisive

contributor to success.

Directly Address your Opponent's Concerns and   Claims.

The calls/cries of: "They will only be paper parks anyway". "Poaching will negate any gains from their declaration." are predictable, but that does not mean they should be ignored.

Demonstrable enforcement procedures are required to overcome claims of "paper parks". In Victoria this was achieved by including in the "package" of measures, attached to the legislation declaring the MPAs, funds to employ 20 new Fisheries Enforcement Officers to assist in protection of the MPAs as well as fisheries in general. As there was little chance of 20 new officers being employed in fisheries without the MPAs not only did this negate the 'paper parks ' argument but gave one of the opponent groups what they had been requesting for years, more fisheries staff.

Opposition is to be expected to "no take" MPAs during consultation i.e. expect a fight. But for opponents, negotiation is sometimes a better strategy than total opposition. Take advantage of opponents overstating their case by responding in a calm, reasonable and rational manner. Victoria's largest circulating newspaper, the Herald –Sun (part of News Corporation) asked its readers in a poll in early 2002 (between the withdrawal and re-introduction of legislation) the "push –poll" question:

"Should the Brack's (Premier) Government revive its plans to lock up large sections of Victorian Waters from fishing by creating 22 marine parks and sanctuaries along the coastline?"

The response was 54 % said "Yes". This may well have heralded the end of the campaign against the MPA establishment. By attempting to get the answer they wanted from the public by use of a factually incorrect and biased question the newspaper sent a

long and strong message to the government. It said "Your decision will be overwhelmingly popular with the general community" (interestingly enough the age breakdown to the question was a "yes" vote from 71 % of under 25s, 58.1 % of 26-34 years and 61.7 % of 35 -44 years. Clearly older people (over 55) were the only groups opposed and one wonders whether their objection may have been more to "change" rather than the actual issue).

5.3. The Critical Importance of an Independent Assessment Body.

Institutional Arrangements in Place for the Process.

The existence in Victoria of a credible independent body (the LCC then ECC) to assess the competing claims of proponents and opponents of MPAs was a significant contributing factor to eventual success.

6.0   Conclusion

The three key areas which resulted in success in MPA declaration in Victoria, and would probably lead to success in other jurisdictions, were a strategic and tactical approach, a clear education and communications strategy and an institutional framework for clear independent decision making.

Victoria's MPA advocates possessed persistence above all else and applied the lessons of earlier failure to each new attempt at a MPA CAR system. Rather than be tempted to water down the MPA proposals over time they actually increased their proposals which meant that there was a clear internal constituency for asking for a 'no-take' CAR system based around MPAs using the publicly recognised terms 'national

parks' and 'sanctuaries'. They also learnt over time that whilst they needed to address their opponents concerns, especially to Government, their message was better aimed at the 'open minded' member of the community rather than politicians and opponents. The campaign message was simplified over time to a system of 'no-take' marine national parks and sanctuaries, which made it easier to communicate to citizens. The value of running in parallel and in support of the political campaign for MPAs a more general non-political awareness campaign on the values and beauty of the marine environment cannot be under estimated. This also meant that even if the MPA campaign "failed" at first some long term value was gained.

Part of the success of both the campaign message and the education one was the use of 'champions', experts in the field that could not be underestimated. All countries (including the USA) should consider the use of experts from outside the country who are hence perceived NOT to have a vested interest in the local outcome.

Finally using an existing consultation and decision making framework was invaluable. Again the open minded citizen who may dismiss the points made for and against a proposal by lobby groups will appreciate the impartial "umpire's" decision.

All of these lessons can be applied in any jurisdiction and if they are applied just maybe the ambitious target of a CAR system of MPAs globally within the next decade will not be a pipedream.

7.0 Acknowledgements.

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Table 1: A Chronology of the Development of Victoria's Marine Protected Areas

1972. Scuba Divers Federation of Victoria propose a marine reserve for the southern area of Port Phillip Bay (PPB), on which Melbourne is situated

1978. Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA, Victorian Branch) convenes a workshop on establishing Marine Reserves in Victoria. Later: Marine Reserves Committee [90] of State Government presents the case for a PPB Marine Reserve and hence The Harold Holt Marine Reserves (Victoria's first) are declared (with one small 'no-take' area).

1979. Storey [91] reports on diver's attitudes to MPAs in Victoria.

May 1982. Cain Labor (progressive) Government promises to establish a system of marine parks along Victoria's coast as a first step towards conservation and recreation management of related sea and land environments of great value and beauty.

June 1982. In a Proposed Recommendations Report [92] the State public land advisory body (formed in 1970) mentions possible establishment of MPAs to be considered in its final recommendations report on the South Gippsland Region of Victoria (150 km south east of Melbourne).

November 1982. LCC publishes final recommendations for the South Gippsland area which includes one marine reserve and three marine and wildlife reserves.

30 November 1982. A small Point Cook Marine Reserve (in PPB) declared under Fisheries Act 1968.

1982. MacDonald [93] proposes a systematic approach to Victorian MPAs.

January 1983. Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) publishes proposals for a series of marine parks (including 'no-take' areas) for the South Gippsland area.

Mid 1983. South Gippsland Marine Council (a loose affiliation of underwater, commercial and recreational fishing interest groups) is formed to oppose MPAs

15 November 1983. Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) calls public meeting in Melbourne in support of MPAs. Nevill [94] reports on Victorian MPA proposals.

1 June 1986. Series of South Gippsland MPAs declared (with limited "no-take" area in one reserve). Abalone fishers take State Government to Supreme Court over loss of abalone fishing rights in 'no-take' marine reserve and eventually win, hence placing a legal 'cloud' over actual control of MPAs. This controversy "stalls" MPA development plans of Government. Wescott [95] compares VNPA and LCC proposals.

Late 1987. Victoria's "forgotten marine reserves" [96] described in an attempt to regain governmental policy momentum.

December 1987 (Proposed November) Bunurong Marine Park and Reserve declared with small "no-take" core, on South Gippsland coast.

Late 1980s. No government action. VNPA forms Marine Subcommittee, carries out a series of National Estate marine studies, slow build up in marine interest within conservation Non Government Organisations (NGOs). Author publishes a three page compendium of all the commitments and promises made by the State Government towards the establishment of a LCC marine and coastal study and eventually a MPA system. Campbell et al [97] publishes descriptions of existing multiple use MPAs for VNPA in an attempt to re-kindle government interest. A Victorian based Marine and Coastal Society is formed (MACS) The original members (academics and public

servants) believe an exclusively marine NGO is required to promote MPAs. (later MACS is incorporated into a Victorian Branch of the Australian Marine Conservation Society, AMCS).

1990. Rosenbaum [98] reports on the status of Marine Conservation in Victoria and Malcolm [99] on the status of the problematic South Gippsland multiple use MPAs, both are working for the VNPA on marine issues. Clarke [100)] also summarises progress.

November 1990. Victorian National Parks Advisory Council (NPAC) proposes methodology for increasing MPAs in Victoria, including the use of the term 'marine national parks' (Annual Report for 1989/90, tabled in State Parliament)

September 1991.Labor Minister for Environment instructs Land Conservation Council, (LCC) to commence a marine and coastal investigation. Begins November.

Late 1992. Kennett Coalition (Conservative) Government elected. Cain Labor Government defeated. New Government has no specific MPA policy but a strong commitment to coastal policy reform.

June 1993. LCC Descriptive report: Marine and Coastal Investigation published [101] with call for public submissions to 29 October (Proposed date of Final Recommendations 30 November 1994, ultimately turns out to be August 2000). Malcolm [102] summarises the progress of MPA development in Victoria up to the commencement of the LCC study.

Late 1993. Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) established by Federal Government to raise awareness of marine and coastal issues and in particular MPAs. Victorian State Coordinator (Tim Allen) appointed. Mr Allen will play a major role in the establishment of the MPA system over the next 9 years.

January 1994. Discussion Paper on proposed changes to Victorian coastal management released and a Coastal Reference Group is established to consider public submissions and to report to the Conservation Minister.

Mid 1994. Coastal Reference Group [103] reports to Minister recommending a Coastal Management Act, a Coastal and Marine Council and a Coastal Strategy.

April 1995. LCC Proposed Recommendations published [104], two years after original report, with call for public submissions, which close on 31 August 1995. The report zoned all Victorian coastal waters and suggested a series of very small highly protected Sanctuary Zones and a series of multiple use (including all types of fishing) Marine Parks across five bioregions.

Easter 1995. Coastal Management Act 1995 passed by Victorian Parliament.

25 May 1995 Dr Bill Ballantine, a New Zealand expert in MPAs visits Victoria.

Late 1995. First Victorian Coastal Council (VCC, originally called Coastal and Bay Management Council), established under Coastal Management Act 1995.

June 1996. LCC publishes [105] its Draft Final Recommendations (Submissions to close 16 August 1996). Twenty multiple use (including fishing of all types) Marine Parks covering 19 % of the State's coastal waters are recommended with 21 very small highly protected Sanctuary Zones enclosed in the parks. In the four and one half month submission period 146 submissions and over 20 letters were received.

14 August 1996. The Herald Sun newspaper (Victoria's largest circulation daily newspaper, a News Corporation 'quality' tabloid) reports a visit by Dr Bill Ballantine in support of a "no-take' MPA in Port Phillip Bay.

Late 1990s. VNPA hosts 'focus groups' on MPAs and decides to use the term 'marine national parks' in their campaigns.

Early 1997 Parks Victoria formed as a provider of management services to the Victorian Government and in particular to manage the State's national park system.

Immediately prior to Easter 1997. LCC final recommendations believed to be "shredded" and LCC wound up by State Government which proposes a replacement alternative body.

28 April 1997. Valerie Taylor, a high profile diver and explorer/author publicly supports the establishment of a Victorian MPA system.

July 1997. Environmental Conservation Council (ECC) is established to replace LCC and continues (starting September) the marine and coastal investigation specifically to identify areas suitable for aquaculture and areas suitable for MPAs.

September to November 1997. Submissions sought for ECC revised study.

November 1997. Victorian Coastal Council (VCC), and hence the Victorian Government, supports the establishment of a comprehensive suite of MPAs in the first Victorian Coastal Strategy [106]

February 1998. ECC publishes its Interim Report [107] on the marine and coastal investigation (five years after the LCC's first descriptive report and 18 months after the LCC's Draft Final Recommendations) and promises a final report by 30 June 1998. Submissions called until April. Reports that a total of 164 submissions were made on the LCC Descriptive Report, 739 submissions on LCC Proposed Recommendations and 1094 on LCC Draft Final Recommendations.

December 1998. Minister requests ECC to review option for Port Phillip Heads

Marine Park, believed to be due to pressure from economic Ministries about the parks' proximity to shipping lanes (review incorporated into final report in August 2000)

1998 through 2001. The Unique South Poster Series produced by MCCN and Environment Australia featuring marine habitats in southern Australia. Over 26,000 are distributed to schools and community groups.

Early 1999. Porter [108] completes the most comprehensive study yet of the development and effectiveness of MPAs in temperate waters.

28 May 1999. Minister tables in Parliament amended Terms of Reference for ECC Marine and Coastal study extending time for study to 30 June 2000. Reports that Interim Report received 226 submissions.

October 1999. Kennett Conservative Government defeated. Bracks Labor (Progressive) Government elected, with a policy commitment to a MPA Comprehensive Adequate and Representative system. This Government though is a 'minority government' i.e. It needs the support of independent members of parliament to pass legislation.

December 1999. ECC publishes Draft Final Report [109], public submissions requested until March 2000. This report recommends 12 highly protected ('no-take') Marine National Parks and 11 highly protected Marine Sanctuaries covering 6.2 % of coastal waters. Reports that over 2,000 submissions in total have been received until this stage of the process.

July & August 2000. "Victoria's Undersea Treasures" (MCCN) are published in The Age newspaper. This is a series of colour full sized posters on five Victorian marine habitats. Total of 1.25 million distributed

August 2000. ECC Final Report forwarded to Minister.

September 2000. The Victorian National Parks Association employs experienced coastal environment campaigner, Mr Chris Smyth, to lead their MPA campaign.

24 October 2000. Government releases ECC Final Report [110] recommending 13 Marine National Parks and 11 Marine sanctuaries, 4,500 public submissions (2,500 after the Draft Report of 1999) are reported to have been received in six formal submission periods over the nine year period of the marine and coastal investigation - the longest by far of any LCC/ECC study

15 January 2001. A major article ("Hidden Treasures") is published in The Age (Victoria's quality daily broadsheet newspaper) describing the beauty and splendour of the marine environment in Victorian coastal waters.

5-7 February 2001. Dr Bill Ballantine visits Victoria in support of ECC MPA proposals.

March 2001. VNPA publishes its third Nature Conservation Review [111], the first to have a comprehensive section on the need for a suite of MPAs, containing the most extensive scientific reference list yet published (approx. 180 references).

14 March 2001. The Victorian recreational fishing peak body withdraws support for 'no-take' MPAs in Victoria.

29 March 2001. One hundred and fifteen leading Australian marine scientists under the auspices of the Australian Marine Science Association (AMSA) produce a Consensus Statement supporting the establishment of the ECC recommended MPA system.

15 May 2001. State Government releases proposed draft legislation for MPA

system.

17 May 2001. Opposition Party describes Government's proposals as a 'cynical and grubby exercise', suggesting that there will not be bi-partisan support for the MPA proposal.

24 May 2001. First of a series of colour Government advertisements publicising proposed MPA system appears in daily newspapers. (on 2 August 2001 The Age reports the cost of these advertisements was $A163,000).

Mid 2001: First Marine National Parks Bill introduced into Parliament with 12 National Parks and 10 sanctuaries (ECC had recommended 13 and 11 respectively).

26 May 2001. Major anti-MPA rally held by opponents of legislation outside Parliament House in Melbourne (approx. 1,000 people attend according to the Herald Sun, 31 May 2001)

31 May 2001. The Age editorial supports the current proposed legislation on MPAs (supported repeated 13 June 2001).

Late May 2001. Recreational fishing groups, commercial fishing groups and the Seafood Industry Council all publicly oppose the proposed legislation. The VNPA, AMSA and Dive Industry Association all publicly support the proposed legislation.

5 June 2001. The minority Opposition party (the Nationals) oppose 'no-take' marine national parks but support small 'no-take' marine sanctuaries.

Mid June 2001. Marine National Parks Bill withdrawn by the Government from Parliament when it is clear that the minority Government has not got the numbers to pass it in its present form.

16 June 2001. Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) President laments the

withdrawal of the MPA bill from parliament in Opinion Piece in The Age. The Age summarises the withdrawal and what might happen next, but believes the re-introduction of the Bill is unlikely.

25 June 2001 VNPA organises an evening "debriefing session" on the withdrawal of the legislation for selected (approx. 12-15 people) MPA activists from across the State.

31 July 2001 The VCC announces in The Age that it will attempt to bring together proponents and opponents of MPAs to work out a compromise position.

5 August 2001. An ACF media release reports that 70 tourism, environment and education groups support the MPA proposals.

6 August 2001. The Age reports that marine park plans are 'back on the (political) agenda'

17 August 2001. The Australian Democrats (Australia's fourth largest political party, centre left in focus) support the original ECC MPA proposal.

16 October 2001. Former Liberal Party leader (Premier), Sir Rupert Hamer, writes an opinion piece in The Age urging support for the original ECC MPA proposal.

16 November 2001. Valerie Taylor and Dr Sylvia Earle visit Victoria and support the ECC MPA proposals.

25 January 2002. Government Environment Minister states that the Government will re-introduce into parliament this year the MPA legislation.

January 2002. Second revised Victorian Coastal Strategy published [112] strongly supporting LCC/ECC study and proposed suite of MPAs.

4 February 2002. The Herald Sun publishes an ambiguous public opinion poll

on MPAs in Victoria (see text for details)

21 February 2002. The Age reports on a 25 year marine study of Victorian coastal waters, collated for the Museum of Victoria by Dr. Tim O'Hara, which revealed over 12,000 species of plants and animals.

5 - 7 March 2002. Prof David Bellamy and Dr Sylvia Earle visit Victoria and speak publicly in support of the MPA proposal.

6 March 2002. The Victorian Coastal Councils hosts an 'influential persons' breakfast to explain the beauty and splendour of the MPA proposal.

25, 27 March 2002. The Age comments that compensation of the fishing industry for loss of catch is the key to the success of any new MPA legislation.

26 March 2002. Government media release unveils new MPA proposals in detail which are consistent with ECC recommendations and include a compensation package for the fishing industry and enforcement provisions. Immediately supported by AMSA.

10 April 2002. New Marine National Parks Bill introduced into parliament with 13 national parks and 11 sanctuaries (as originally proposed by ECC except boundaries vary slightly). Government again runs media advertisements in support of proposal.

12 April 2002. Boating Industry Association attacks new MPA proposals. The Age reports that the Government has told the Opposition "to put up or shut up' i.e. to pass the legislation or to state clearly and publicly why it opposes the legislation.

16 April 2002. The Age reports that at the Victorian Coastal Conference, sponsored by the VCC, the 160 delegates have passed a motion supporting the MPA legislation

22 April 2002. Two former Premiers (Government leaders) from two opposing

political parties (Joan Kirner and Sir Rupert Hamer) write a letter to The Age calling for bi-partisan support for the new MPA legislation in a letter titled: "Marine Parks: a plea from two grandparents"

11 May 2002. The Age reports on a meeting between the Government and Opposition which agrees to support the MPA legislation combined with a compensation and enforcement package.

13 June 2002. Marine National Parks Bill passed by parliament with the support of the Liberal Party, the main opposition party.

16 November 2002. First of the Marine National Parks and Marine Sanctuaries are declared. All are "no-take" throughout. The Age reports the suite of MPAs as a 'world first system of representative marine national parks and sanctuaries'.

March 2003. Parks Victoria MPA awards celebration. Awards made to people who contributed to the achievement of MPAs in Victoria. See text for details. Parks Victoria also publishes its ten year strategy for MPA planning and management [113]