



Hon Tim Mulherin MP
Member for Mackay

Reference: 07853/10



**Queensland
Government**

**Minister for Primary Industries,
Fisheries and Rural and Regional
Queensland**

20 SEP 2010

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Neil
Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for letter of 20 August 2010 forwarding the petition number 1480 – 10
“Fraser/Cooloolo Coasts fishing closure” to me for response.

The requests made in the petition are legitimate and I understand the concerns of the petitioners.

The petitioners have asked the Queensland Legislative Assembly to make strong representations to the Federal Government relating to the Area for Further Assessment (AFFA) identified off Fraser Island by the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) as part of their broader nationwide Bioregional planning exercise. In particular the petitioners ask that their concerns are addressed and that full assessments of potential impacts are made before any decision is taken to implement a marine park.

I can assure the petitioners that in June 2010 the Queensland Government made representations to DEWHA through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet concerning the AFFA addressing the matters they have raised (attached).

In summary and in relation to fishing we said:

1. The Queensland Government supports the principles of the Federal Governments National Marine Bioregional Program and will actively contribute to the process to ensure that the best outcome can be reached to balance the needs for biodiversity protection and the current and future uses for social and economic outcomes.

Level 8
Primary Industries Building
80 Ann Street Brisbane

GPO Box 46 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia

Telephone +61 7 3239 3000
Facsimile +61 7 3229 8541
Email dpi@ministerial.qld.gov.au

ABN 65 959 415 158

2. Until the proposed marine reserve networks within the AFFA is made available for comment it is impossible for the Queensland Government to determine the extent of the potential impacts to current and future social and economic activities. The Queensland Government urges that all efforts be made to minimise social and economic impacts in the design of any marine reserves within the AFFA.
3. The Queensland Government urges that appropriate mechanisms are developed to fairly compensate any resource users whose activities will be impacted by the establishment of marine reserves in the AFFA.
4. The Queensland Government would like to ensure that the community is adequately consulted on future management arrangements. It asks that consultation continue with each sector and that they be given an opportunity to raise issues and contribute to the available information before marine reserve networks are developed, put out for consultation and finally determined.
5. Any new marine reserves in the AFFA need to provide for the ongoing use of the fisheries resources by recreational and commercial fishing and recognise the likely expansion of fishing effort which is managed sustainably by the Queensland Government.
6. Any future marine reserves have the potential to restrict access and activities of charter boats. Given that these operations are essentially recreational fishing, and that fishing is managed sustainably by the Queensland Government, consideration should be given to imposing no additional restrictions on these operations beyond those that will apply to recreational fishing.
7. The Queensland Government strongly recommends that any proposed marine reserves quantify current and future impacts on social uses and employment and economic opportunities. Specifically, any proposed marine reserves need to outline how those impacts will be addressed to ensure that social uses and employment and economic opportunities in the region are not lost.

I can assure the petitioners that the Queensland Government is committed to engaging in the bioregional planning process and seeking the best outcome for Queenslanders.

Yours sincerely



TIM MULHERIN, MP
Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries
and Rural and Regional Queensland
Member for Mackay
Att

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**Queensland
Government**

For reply please quote: ERP/GB – TF/10/13034 – DOC/10/67119

Department of the
Premier and Cabinet

25 JUN 2010

Mr Stephen Oxley
Acting First Assistant Secretary
Marine Division
Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Oxley

This letter forms the Queensland Government response to the consultation document 'Description of Areas for Further Assessment in the East Marine Region'.

The Queensland territorial waters of the east coast represent a large, biodiversity rich and complex part of the Queensland coast. A significant proportion of this region is already protected through a network of marine and national parks including the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, Lihou Reef National Nature Reserve, the Great Sandy Strait Marine Park and the Moreton Bay Marine Park.

Queensland east coast waters are highly valued by the entire Queensland community and have a wide range of existing uses - including commercial fishing, shipping, tourism, and recreational sports (including fishing and sailing).

The Queensland Government supports the principles of the Australian Government's National Marine Bioregional Program and will actively contribute to the process to ensure that the best outcome can be reached to balance the needs for biodiversity protection and the current and future uses for social and economic outcomes.

As previously advised in recognition of the breadth of the interest involved, the Queensland Government has established an Interdepartmental Committee (IDC) to provide a single Queensland Government response to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) in relation to the consultation document. The IDC is comprised of the following Queensland departments and agencies:

- The Department of the Premier and Cabinet
- Queensland Treasury
- The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI)
 - Fisheries Queensland
 - Tourism
 - Mines, Energy and Manufacturing
 - Employment

Executive Building
100 George Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3224 2111
Facsimile +61 7 3229 2990
Website www.premiers.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

- The Department of Environment and Resource Management
 - Marine Policy
 - Parks and Wildlife
- The Department of Transport and Main Roads
 - Maritime Safety Queensland

The following comments are restricted to the two Areas For Further Assessment (AFFA) identified by DEWHA in Queensland territorial waters – The Coral Sea and Fraser Island AFFA.

Until the proposed marine reserve networks within the two AFFAs are made available for comment, it is impossible for Queensland to determine the extent of the potential impacts to current and future social and economic activities. The Queensland Government urges that all efforts be made to address social and economic impacts in the design of any marine reserves within the two AFFAs. Additionally, the Queensland Government urges that appropriate mechanisms are developed to fairly compensate any resource users whose activities will be impacted by the establishment of marine reserves.

The Queensland Government would like to ensure that the community is adequately consulted on future management arrangements. It asks that consultation continue with each sector and that they be given an opportunity to raise issues and contribute to the available information before marine reserve networks are developed, put out for consultation and finally determined.

The following specific information and advice is provided by the Queensland Government to inform development of proposals for Commonwealth marine reserves in the East Marine Region AFFAs.

Continuity Between State and Federal Marine Reserves

Queensland believes that existing marine reserves such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park, Great Sandy Marine Park and the Moreton Bay Marine Park already provide significant biodiversity protection for Queensland territorial waters on the east coast.

Depending on their location future marine reserves within the two AFFAs have the potential to enhance the existing marine reserves. They can do this by improving connectivity between marine reserves and providing key ecological features and processes that are not currently part of marine reserves protection.

The Fraser Island AFFA however includes a small area south of Double Island Point that is not adjacent to the Great Sandy Marine Park. To provide continuity between State and Federal marine reserves, it is suggested that any marine reserve proposed in the Fraser Island AFFA does not include waters south of Double Island Point. This would ensure maximum connectivity between the existing Great Sandy Marine Park and future marine reserves within the AFFA.

Fishing

Detailed catch and effort information relating to commercial fishing managed by Queensland has been provided to DEWHA by Fisheries Queensland, a service of DEEDI. This information demonstrates that the commercial fishing industry is a significant user of the Fraser Island AFFA and to a lesser extent the Coral Sea AFFA. It should be noted however, that other commercial fisheries operate in the AFFAs that are managed by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority.

The operation of commercial fisheries provides significant employment opportunities both offshore and onshore in fishing and related support industries. These industries drive valuable domestic and export markets. All efforts should be made to minimise the impact of new marine reserves developed through this process on existing commercial fishing activities.

Recreational and charter boat fishing operations occur in both AFFAs. Recreational and charter fishing are important, growing sectors in these regions.

There is potential for future, sustainable, commercial and recreational fishing expansion in the Coral Sea AFFA both for state and federally managed fisheries. The design and zoning of any future marine reserve network in that AFFA needs to maximise protection for the region's bioregional characteristics, while allowing for commercial and recreational fishing to continue, where the fishing activity does not impact on the protection that these marine reserves are meant to afford.

Ecotourism

Ecotourism is already a large and thriving industry within marine reserves adjacent to the AFFAs and in the AFFAs themselves. The Queensland Government is particularly interested in maintaining the potential for future ecotourism expansion in the Coral Sea AFFA and encourages the Australian Government to look at ways that these activities can be encouraged and supported in any future marine reserve.

Indigenous use

Queensland is not aware of any significant use of resources in the two AFFAs by Indigenous people. However, culturally many of the coastal communities have significant interests in the marine environment, with tidal lands and waters being a source of food and cultural value. The Queensland Government encourages DEWHA to consult directly with Indigenous representatives to ensure their views and aspirations are considered in the development of marine reserves.

Commercial Shipping

Both AFFAs are used by commercial shipping for navigation access to Queensland ports. Due to the extent of the Coral Sea AFFA, this has the potential to impact on all Queensland

ports in some way. Therefore, it is critical that continued navigation access be maintained for commercial shipping activities in these areas when marine reserves are developed.

Recreational Boating

Both AFFAs are used for recreational boating, including navigation and anchoring. Recreational boating supports significant onshore industries and businesses, it is therefore critical that recreational boating access to areas be considered in the development of marine reserves.

Implementation Arrangements

Clarification is sought on the implementation arrangements for future marine reserves in the region. Given Queensland's extensive experience in marine protected area management and the ongoing successful management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, the Queensland Government would encourage further dialogue about the mutual benefits associated with inter-jurisdictional collaboration in relation to the delivery of field management services for any new marine reserves.

General Comments on Current and Future Activity

The Queensland Government strongly recommends that any proposed marine reserves quantify current and future impacts on social uses and employment and economic opportunities. Specifically, any proposed marine reserves need to outline how those impacts will be addressed to ensure that social uses and employment and economic opportunities in the region are not lost.

If you require any further information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Grahame Byron, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, by telephone on (07) 3405 6259 or by email at: grahame.byron@premiers.qld.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Adrian Jeffreys
Executive Director
Environment and Resources Policy