



AUSTRALIAN RECREATIONAL
FISHING FOUNDATION

MEDIA RELEASE

Commonwealth Marine Park Management Plans – the right balance

The Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation (ARFF) is the national organisation representing the interests of Australia's recreational fishing community. ARFF's members and supporters represent the estimated 5 million Australians who fish Australian waters and generate an estimated \$10 billion annually in economic contribution for our local, regional and national economies. This makes Australia's recreational fishers the largest stakeholder user group affected by Commonwealth Marine Parks.

Chairman of ARFF Brett Cleary welcomed this week's announcement by the Coalition Governments of new and improved management plans for Australia's network of Marine Parks following years of consultation, review and public submissions.

"These new plans not only recognise recreational fishing as being largely compatible with the conservation objectives of marine parks they also finally recognise recreational fishing as a key value of Marine Parks." Mr Cleary said.

"These new evidence based management plans strike a good balance between the needs of all stakeholders and they are definitely a vast improvement on the previous plans which locked recreational fishers out of hundreds of thousands of square kilometres of Australia's oceans with no scientific justification."

"These new plans ensure fishers will retain access to some of their most beloved and important fishing areas such as the Coral Sea in the Northeast and Geopraphe Bay in the Southwest of Australia, locations which have provided generations of Australians with great and sustainable fishing experiences."

"ARFF are pleased the Expert Scientific Panel who reviewed the former Management Plans and Minister Frydenberg listened and addressed our concerns. The voice of reason, the voice of fishing families and the voice of all reasonable stakeholders has been heard."

ARFF are not surprised the usual groups are once again making outrageous and unsubstantiated claims about inadequate levels of protection even though these new plans provide 200,000 square kilometres more protection than the previous plans. It is worth noting some of these groups won't be satisfied until all fishing is stopped or until the political party they identify with is the one to introduce management plans.

"ARFF has no political affiliation and support these plans solely based on their merit." Mr Cleary said.

ARFF are now urging all politicians to put aside their political differences and support these plans.

"It is time for Australia to finally have a National network of marine parks that has something for everyone."

"These plans provide our marine environment with a high level of protection while satisfying the needs of all reasonable stakeholders. After years of uncertainty it is now time for our marine environment to stop being treated as a political football." Mr Cleary said.

ARFF urge people to check out the Management Plans for themselves on the following link

<https://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/management/plans/>

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