



Campaign Media Release

**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION, HERITAGE & THE ARTS
MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE,
FISHERIES AND FORESTRY**

**THE MARINE PARK PLANNING PROCESS UNDER THE GILLARD
GOVERNMENT**

Minister for Environment Protection Peter Garrett and Minister for Agriculture Tony Burke today said the Coalition was waging a dishonest fear campaign on the future of commercial and recreational fishing.

The Coalition are deliberately misleading fishers and their families and causing unnecessary concern.

The Gillard Government is continuing to work through the same process on Marine Protected Areas which was begun under former Prime Minister John Howard.

This process is based on science, detailed planning and community consultation.

And, as it always has been, the process will involve close consultation with fishing communities, coastal communities, recreational and commercial fishers, marine and tourism businesses and environmental groups, to reach the right balance and ensure our marine regions remain sustainable into the future.

This feedback will be carefully examined when determining the possible location and size of any marine parks.

No decisions have been made on the location of any new marine parks and we will consult further with the community before any decisions are made.

Federal Labor does not support the Greens' calls for arbitrary targets which do not reflect the science.

Importantly, marine parks have no impact on beach fishing and minimal impact on recreational fishing – because they only affect Commonwealth waters which generally begin more than five kilometres out to sea.

Tony Abbott has not offered any alternative plan for industry.

He has only offered to suspend the consultation already underway – which would leave the industry in limbo and leave fishers with more uncertainty.

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COMMUNICATIONS UNIT: Phone: (02) 9384 2220 | Fax: (02) 9264 2213 www.alp.org.au

AUTHORISED N.MARTIN for the ALP, 5/9 Sydney Ave. Barton ACT

ATTACHMENT TO MARINE PLANNING STATEMENT

Federal Labor's plan for Marine Protected Areas will conserve biodiversity and protect the ocean environment, while improving the sustainability of commercial and recreational fishing as well as marine tourism. The plan will start with Australia's unique South West Marine Region. A draft plan for public consultation will be released in the first three months of the next term of the Gillard Government and finalized by June 2011.

Other elements of Labor's plan include:

- A scientifically driven process that determines the location and size of marine protected areas;
- Ongoing thorough and balanced consultation with stakeholders and the wider community to establish a shared vision for ocean health, ocean use and ocean protection, and the identification of new economic opportunities;
- A balanced approach, that provides the highest level of conservation protection for important and special areas and continues to allow sustainable fishing in other areas of the marine parks
- Finalisation of the remainder of the marine bioregional plans - North, Northwest and East - by December 2011;
- An appropriate program budget to support the marine bioregional planning program nationally, including:
 - Assistance for possible displaced activities – while the objective is to minimise the impacts, a Commonwealth policy to provide fair and reasonable assistance in the event that any industries are affected by greater marine protection will be released within the first two months of the next term of government.
 - Funding for management, enforcement and education - the necessary resources for the effective management of marine protected areas and shore based community programs.
- Finalising the National Network of Whale and Dolphin Sanctuaries Federal Labor has been developing in collaboration with State Governments.