



Position Statement #8 State Marine Parks

1. Introduction

The Marine Park system has led to significant loss of commercial fishing access but is an essential activity in marine parks under a multi-use ethos that has characterised these parks like the Great Sandy Marine Park (GSMP)¹.

The Association seeks the maintenance of a multi-use philosophy across all State Marine Parks. Moreover, existing commercial fishing activity which has provided social and economic benefits across Queensland are recognised as legitimate and welcome as essential as any other use of the marine park system.

2. Rationale

The Queensland Seafood industry Association's (QSIA) position on the zoning plan review²:

1. That the GSMP zoning review maintains a multi-use ethos without undermining existing commercial fishing activity which has provide social and economic benefits across the region.
2. That the best available, peer reviewed science is used to help determine zoning that maintains and does not limit commercial fishing activity in the marine park typical of a resource reallocation policy which is outside the jurisdiction of the review.
3. That no commercial fishing businesses are sacrificed in the event of "trade-offs" of closing one area in favour of another.
4. If any areas are to be extended for green zones then discussions are held between government and industry on new zones that would have minimal impact on commercial fishing operations
5. That decisions relate to actual environmental threats rather than personal agenda pursued for many years by those seeking to exclude others from the very fishing grounds they insist on being able to continue to fish.
6. Acknowledgement is required that the numbers of commercial fishers has been greatly reduced over the past twenty years and that the commercial sector's catch data is already captured in close to 'real time' and fishers' movements in the GSMP are monitored through the VMS system whereas the same does not apply to any other sector using the marine park. The recreational sector has no enforceable requirements to provide catch data, no effort caps apart from very generous bag limits and no tracking mechanism to facilitate checks for compliance to zoning, size and bag limits and no restrictions on the numbers of participants or the extent of fishing effort in even straight yellow conservation zones.

¹ It is clear that there are many elements of the existing Marine Park system that are detrimental to the operation of commercial fishing that with adjustments could achieve both ecological and commercial fishing outcomes.

² QSIA submission to GSMP Zoning Review, 25 February 2019, pp. 6-7.

7. Zoning decisions need to be made on a scientific, risk-based approach and not on the whim of recreational or conservation groups. It is unjustifiable, given the social and economic importance of the seafood industry, to zone commercial fishing activities out of existence in a multi-use marine park.

The issues outlined by the Association are applicable to any Marine Park in Queensland.

The Association supports the Hervey Bay Seafood Incorporated submission which noted³, 'To have a security of tenure as a legitimate stakeholder in the GSMP established in a way that it gives clarity and removes any uncertainty that the GSMP zoning plan's intent is to recognise commercial fishing as a legal and welcome stakeholder in the zones where sustainable commercial fishing operations are now currently operating'.

3. Conclusion

3.1. Course of Action

Continued cooperation between industry and conservation management to ensure ecological, social and economic considerations are balanced in a multi-use State Marine Park system.

3.2. Solution

Commercial fishing is a recognised and welcome part of the State Marine Park system.

4. Authorisation

The QSIA is the peak industry body representing the Queensland seafood industry. Our members include professional fishers, seafood processors, marketers, retailers and other business associated with the seafood industry. Our representation to members and the community at large is to promote the consumption of wild caught Queensland seafood.

Approved and Endorsed by: QSIA Board
November 2019

For Review: November 2020

³ Hervey Bay Seafood Incorporated submission to GSMP Zoning Review, 25 February 2019, p. 6.