

Meeting with DPI Minister Ian Macdonald 8th March 2006

Introduction

- Meeting organised by Angela D'Amore, Member for Drummoyne at the request of Richard Spata who raised the issue with Angela D'Amore.

- Present were Richard Spata, Doug Joyner, Malcolm Poole and John Burgess and Phil Ingram. Also there were Angela D'Amore, Ian Macdonald, the Minister's advisor Jamie Gibson and his secretary.

- Main issues discussed were marine parks and dioxins in Sydney Harbour

- After the meeting, Angela D'Amore said stated that backbenchers can often help. She would like to pursue these matters further, and would like to arrange a meeting for the same group to see Bob Debus. It was also suggested that Eddie Obeid may also be someone else to see, and Angela agreed, and she also mentioned the cabinet committee) that may also be worth considering. Angela also stated that she has a speech to give regrading Marine Parks to Parliament in April and she would appreciate any information we can provide.

Marine Parks

- Asked if the plan is to complete both Manning and Bateman's Bay processes to gazettal by Christmas, Minister confirmed it was. This means a 7 month process rather than a 2-3 year process as for others. He

stated the time frame had nothing to do with arragnements with Greens for preferences, but was a Cabinet decision in 2002/03 to have 6 marine parks completed by end of 2006.

He also mentioned that he doubted if the Coalition would have the support to wind back the process if elected to power next year.

He also stated that Bob Debus is in charge of the Batemans Bay Bio region, while he is in charge of the Manning/ Pt Stephens process.

- Asked about socio-economic studies - Minister said they were part of the process - but this issue was glanced over in questions.

- He stated that the current recreational fishing havens are exempt from marine parks and no-take zones.

- Asked about the science used in the decision making process for the reason for the no-take zones, and how to measure the effectiveness of marine parks etc, his advisor brought up the 1996 Consensus statement, the Minister mentioned evidence for no-take zones and spill-over. We pointed out no scientific evidence supports this, a later consensus statement in 2004 doesn't support the 1996 one etc. The Minister finally said that the precautionary approach was taken for no-take zones.

- Queried about the NPA and NCC, and their claims for 50% no take zones, the Minister stated that these are ambit claims and they will never be realised. He acknowledged that fishers, MPA and NPA/NCC want the same areas on the map - either for access or to be locked up. The Minister also pointed out the current process is defining these areas on the maps, and the rec fishing representatives are doing a good job for Pt Stephens. Called the process "finnessing".

The visiting group requested that Fishing/Boating licence holders be included in the consultation process.

AFTA Directly requested that Jamie Gibson respond to this request. The minister also described spill over affects from sancturaries as a positive.

It was pointed out to the Minister that there is no proof of spill over affects, confrirmed by the Department of Heritage and Environment.

- It was also pointed out that access is also being restricted by National Parks in closing off access tracks, vehicle access to beaches etc. Lands Department Pied Oyster threatened species, near Black Rock Ballina Shire. He did not seem to be aware of this.

Sydney Harbour and Dioxins

- Asked about Sydney Harbour problem and other areas such as Botany Bay with the Orica issue, Minister stated that the Sydney dioxin problem was unique in that a particular product was produced and resulting in a particular by-product.

- Question of distributing the information to the tackle shops for example. Minister said all the information is on the web, but others stated about getting the information out via DPI's data base. This will be looked into.

It was pointed out to the minister that it was not industries position to do the Governments work for them, thus information needs to be available to give concerned consumers with the departments contact details.

- Minister stated that with regard to recreational fishing, he will be making a statement shortly, but will be keeping to an advisory function.

Striped Marlin

- Currently developing an MOU with the Commonwealth.

- When asked about opening dialog with the new Federal Minister, Macdonald said the new Minister can contact him first.

- It was pointed out that bait fish are a big issue with recreational fishers, and we want to see all marlin to be recreational only. The banning of taking of baitfish can be done at the State level. At the very minimum there should be a credible monitoring/observer program on.

these Commonwealth fishing vessels Main Points of meeting with DPI Minister

Ian Macdonald on 8th March

2006