



Media Release

Anglers Action Group (Sydney Northside) Inc

PO Box 630 Narrabeen NSW 2101
aag@sponge.org

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For immediate release: **Concerns over undefined goals for sanctuary zones**

The Ernst and Young report commissioned by the Tackle and Boating Industries states "the National Objectives and Targets for Biodiversity Conservation 2001-2005 (June 2001), signed by the Commonwealth and five States and Territories, include as a target the protection of 'a representative sample of each bioregion' within the National Reserve System." The UN Convention on Biological Diversity does not commit Australia to including a specified percentage of the area of MPAs to be no-take sanctuary zones.

The last two marine parks declared have approximately 20% sanctuary zones each in the draft plans, with some habitat types such as inshore reefs being as high as 62%. From the MPA's own web page: "Wherever possible, multiple representation of like habitats need to be protected to ensure ongoing conservation of such habitats if, for whatever reason, a catastrophe severely impacts any one location." This is not science. It is not the taking of a "representative sample from each bioregion". It is the taking to the extreme of what's referred to as "the precautionary principal" as a poor excuse to justify the basis for zoning for the large percentage specific habitats being declared "sanctuary zones".

Nowhere in the draft plans has it been stated how recreational fishing is detrimental to the conservation of biological diversity and the marine habitats. Neither has it been stated what the goals are for the individual zonings on a case-by-case basis and what is to be achieved with the zonings. Neither has it been stated how progress towards these unstated goals will be measured. Without threats identified, nor goal stated, how can amelioration be accomplished and progress towards these goal be identified.

Premier Iemma's allegedly made a statement at a function at Parliament House, Sydney, on 29th November 2005 to a group of environmentalists that: "Like each of the State's existing marine parks, access to favourite fishing spots in these new marine parks will be fully protected." And this is a statement the Premier has not denied making. AAG President Mr Phil Ingram said "The processes involved in the marine parks appear to be a grab for land using as a basis an extreme case of the precautionary principal such that the protection of the environment is used to mask other agendas. Sharri Markson reported on 27 July of confidential notes that show the Greens offering Labor preferences over issues that include marine parks. These preference deals appear to be this hidden agenda."

Contact: Phil Ingram 0431 650 996

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