



Media Release

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Media Release: 20th November 2006.

For immediate release: **Concerns over socio-economic impact of marine parks**

Three socio-economic reports have been released on the Bateman's marine park, one by the Marine Parks Authority (in conjunction with a companion report on the impact assessment on commercial activities), one by Strategic Economic Solutions for the Eurobodalla Shire Council, and another by Ernst and Young for AFTA and BIA.

The MPA report was inconclusive stating "there is no consensus on the likely impact of zoning in the proposed marine park on recreational fishing", but the commercial SEI report predicted a net loss of 2-3 jobs, 14 jobs lost in commercial fishing offset by the creation of 11 jobs to do with marine park management and administration. No mention was made of associated businesses.

The SES report predicts the immediate impact of the marine park to be a loss of \$30m and 55 jobs in the first year with a predicted negative impact over the next 3 years. The Ernst and Young report concentrated on recreational fishing impacts and told a similar story, with the industry having a gross value of \$44.5m and net value of \$27.2m to the Narooma/Bermagui economy, and with a gross output of \$25.7m to the NSW economy, concluding the need to exercise caution in the creation of sanctuary zones.

The zoning plans have serious economic implications for these coastal communities with the future of the south coast tourism industry being uncertain. To help minimize the impact on tourism the NSW Government has offered \$100,000 to the council for a separate marketing campaign to combat the "misinformation"

Minister Debus cites a report that states the Coff's Harbour region economy has improved by \$6m and attributes this to the Solitary Islands Marine Park (SIMP). What is omitted is the report was based on figures obtained in 1997, one year before the SIMP was established and the report was done in 2001 when no-take zones were only 2%. AAG President Phil Ingram says "The SIMP report was based on 32 businesses. The Bateman's SES study was obtained from 102 businesses and yet the Government ignores it. And there is no comment from Minister Debus concerning the Ernst and Young report. Coff's is a more diverse economy not reliant on fishing nor tourism. This is not the case for the south coast communities, and the Government seems to be ignoring this fact. And what of compensation for related businesses that will be affected? There isn't any!"

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