

Fishing Industry Supports Marine Parks Report – Provides ‘Unlimited Potential’

The SA Marine Parks Management Alliance, which represents commercial fishers in South Australia, today strongly endorsed the report issued by the Centre for Policy Development (CPD), a think-tank linked to marine conservation lobby groups. The report, authored by theoretical economist Catherine Hoisinger showed that South Australia’s proposed marine parks sanctuary areas would generate a net profit of \$22.8 million per year in ‘ecosystem services’. Previously the SA Government had calculated there would be a net loss of \$63.9 million in implementing them.

“Together with the conservation sector we are convinced that this provides a unique opportunity for the State and for the fishing industry” said Dr. Morgan, Chairman of the Alliance.

“Proposed sanctuary areas cover approximately 6% of the State’s marine waters” he added “and, as a result of this report, we now think this is nowhere near enough”.

“We therefore call on the Government to immediately declare all existing marine parks, which cover 44% of State waters, as Sanctuary Zones and move quickly to declaring all South Australia State waters as Sanctuaries, where all activities, including both recreational and commercial fishing is prohibited” Dr. Morgan insisted.

“Based on the analysis contained in this groundbreaking study, this would generate over \$380 million per annum in ecosystem services” he noted,

“This would be sufficient to provide all ex-fishermen (both commercial and recreational) with an annual stipend equivalent to the gross value of their lost catch and would, in addition, add over \$150 million per annum to Government revenue” he explained.

“These figures are a minimum” he said “since current Government expenses in managing the fishing sector and fishermen’s operational expenses would also be eliminated”.

“We believe that, managed properly, this is a win-win situation that protects the marine environment more effectively than the current Government proposals, generates significant wealth for the State and provides ex-fishermen and regional communities that depend on them with a sustainable source of revenue forever”, he said.

“Not catching fish could be a larger industry than the fishing industry” Dr. Morgan said “I am amazed that we hadn’t considered this previously”

“We are also very excited about the prospects for future growth in this new industry of not catching fish” he added, “The potential is unlimited and could even be extended to other natural resource industries such as oil production, mining and even farming”, Dr. Morgan added.

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The cost of marine parks to our communities

“The Minister for Environment, Paul Caica and conservation groups have already warmly supported and endorsed the CPD report and therefore, with full support from all stakeholders, the Minister must act immediately to realise the full potential of this new and exciting industry before other countries do so”, Dr. Morgan said.

“The last thing we want is foreigners commercialising another great Aussie innovation” he concluded “otherwise we could see a worldwide trend of countries entering the not catching fish industry”. Dr. Morgan added

“However, based on our detailed assessment, this appears unlikely at the moment since the new Marine Parks arrangements in SA will boost demand for imported fish, thereby putting pressure on Australia’s international competitors in the not catching fish industry.”

For more information about the Sounds Fishy campaign, go to:

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