

Net Cast Wider on Marine Park Costs

Thousands of South Australian businesses may be eligible for compensation as a result of proposed marine park impacts according to legal advice received by the South Australian Marine Parks Management Alliance.

Alliance Chairman, Dr Gary Morgan, says the advice indicates that those eligible to apply for compensation as a result of marine park impacts could be far more wide ranging than just affected commercial fishers.

“We have been advised that holders of *any* statutory authorisation, licence or permit issued under *any* Act should be eligible to apply for compensation if their business is negatively impacted through the introduction of marine parks in South Australia,” Dr Morgan said.

“This development means that all businesses ancillary to the commercial fishing industry, as well as impacted tourism operators, licensed hospitality businesses, licensed fuel suppliers, and the list goes on, all now have a mechanism to seek recompense for impacts on their businesses.

“Over the coming weeks we will be calling for business owners who will be affected by the marine parks proposal to register their details with the Alliance - the flow-on business impacts must be addressed up front as part of this process.

“Minister Caica has indicated that marine park compensation will stop with impacted commercial fishers and that any further effects will be ignored - something that regional South Australians can ill-afford.

“This would also mean an even greater hit to the South Australian taxpayer to implement Minister Caica’s already costly network of marine parks.

“The economic and social cost of the proposed marine parks will be devastating for all South Australians, and this latest revelation is just another spear through the heart of local communities.

“It’s very clear the Government is taking advantage of the marine park ‘fatigue’ and leading the South Australian community down a path where they don’t fully understand the ramifications.”

Today, the Alliance will launch a new campaign which urges all South Australians to understand the real costs of the proposed marine park zones and calls on the Government to address the real issues associated with marine conservation, such as marine pests, oil spills and pollution.

Sounds Fishy, an initiative of the Alliance, which represents the State’s eleven different fishing sectors, aims to simplify the complex marine parks issue using a simple animation (www.youtube.com/watch?v=NW8nEOI6nhc) which sits at the centre of the campaign.

“It’s important for the public to know the devastating ripple effect that the decision will have on the community and economy by way of job losses, increased imports, higher local seafood prices, reduced exports from SA and potentially significant costs to deal with impacted businesses,” Dr Morgan said.

“Everyone will be impacted in some way, but none more so than our regional coastal communities, many of which are already struggling.

SOUNDS FISHY

The cost of marine parks to our communities

“Of the \$560 million a year the industry delivers to the SA economy, the vast majority benefits our regional communities. The commercial fishing industry is responsible for around 4,200 jobs in regional SA alone, which provides long term, sustainable economic benefits and employment.

“Our research indicates the economic impact to our regional communities will be approximately \$40 million per year and a loss of about 260 jobs directly and indirectly. The job losses are significantly more than those estimated by the State Government in the recent impact reports.

“It has the potential to cripple some regional towns that are already teetering on the edge of survival.”

Dr Morgan said the Alliance remains committed to marine conservation, but not at this cost.

“We believe there’s a better solution and the Government has not listened. Australian fisheries are already recognised globally for world-class sustainable seafood production. The Government’s plans will close down our sustainable fisheries, increase imports and put more pressure on unsustainable fish resources in Asia. It contradicts the State’s Strategic Plan with regard to sustainable produce. It’s not good enough,” he said.

“We urge everyone to use this public consultation period to understand the real impact of the marine parks as they’re currently proposed and let their voice be heard.”

People are urged to go to www.environment.sa.gov.au/haveyoursay before the closing date of 22 October, 2012 or to fill in the Sounds Fishy online petition at www.communityrun.org/petitions/sounds-fishy-the-cost-of-marine-parks-to-our-communities.

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

Website: www.soundsfishy.org.au

Twitter: @SoundsFishy_SA or #SoundsFishy

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sounds-Fishy/271912926258887>

YouTube: XXX

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South Australia's Proposed Marine Park Zones - The Facts

The South Australian Government's marine parks, as they are currently proposed, will have little benefit to marine conservation; yet will have a major impact on all South Australians. Here are the facts:

- Australian fisheries are already recognised globally for their world-class standards (ranked second out of 53 countries for environmental sustainability). The Government's plans will close down our sustainable fisheries, increase imports and put more pressure on unsustainable fish resources in Asia.
- South Australia already imports over 70% of its seafood. The proposed marine park zoning will result in a reduced supply of fresh local produce and an increase in imports to meet demand. South Australians will become reliant on imported seafood and be forced to pay more for fish that come from our own waters.
- Combined, the commercial fishing industry is responsible for over a quarter of a billion dollars of exports, supports local regional economies and generates close to \$2 billion of economic activity for South Australia each year.
- The proposed marine park plans are projected to cost taxpayers, and the economy, in excess of half a billion dollars over the next five years - that's significantly more than the carbon tax.
- The economic and social impact on our regional coastal communities will be devastating due to the loss of jobs - not just those that relate directly to fishing, but local shops, tourism outlets and pubs, to name a few. The flow on effect will be felt by everyone. It will deliver a death knell for many small towns that are already struggling, with local regional economies expected to lose over \$40 million each year.
- Proposed marine parks zones will result in a loss of sustainable seafood production of about \$10 million per year, impacting on many regional areas and economies, particularly the Far West Coast and Kangaroo Island.
- The seafood industry supports marine conservation and strictly follows regulations to conserve our marine life - our livelihoods depend on it. What we do not support is the Government's no-take zones as currently planned. They will have little benefit to conservation and do not address the biggest threats to our precious marine life, such as pollution, marine pests and oil spills.

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