

MEDIA RELEASE

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Marine Parks - The Real Impact

The South Australian Rock Lobster Advisory Council Inc (SARLAC) has released a new, independent, scientific report documenting the real impacts of the South Australian Government's proposed network of marine parks.

SARLAC Executive Officer, Justin Phillips, said the report which includes some estimates up to double those provided by Government, had been compiled utilising new commercial in confidence information, not previously available, to better quantify the impacts on the commercial rock lobster industry in South Australia.

"It's imperative the real impacts of the marine parks process are accurately quantified so that they may be addressed appropriately," said Mr Phillips.

"The impact on the entire fishing industry is significant; however rock lobster, an important export earner for the State, will be heavily impacted in terms of lost production.

"The SA Rock Lobster Industry is South Australia's most valuable commercial fishery generating in excess of \$240 million worth of economic activity for the State each year, with much of that benefiting regional coastal communities and economies on the West Coast, Yorke Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and in the South East.

"If the Government proceeds with proposed marine park sanctuary zones, this report shows there will be significant, ongoing economic impacts for the State, particularly in the regions.

"If the marine park sanctuary zones are not revisited, it will be these regional communities and economies that bear the end cost as the true impacts are realised over coming years.

"These are mostly small, family businesses at stake, its critical the Government understands that fishers want to minimise impacts so they may continue to fish sustainably into the future.

"We will now continue to work with the Government to ensure these differences are addressed as a part of the socio-economic impact assessment process."

Mr Phillips said the report had already been provided to the Government for consideration.

Mr Phillips noted that South Australian fisheries are already managed to world-class standards and are a sustainable, renewable source of food production for this State as well as generating a wealth of export income. They also provide a source of cherished recreation for many South Australian families.

"With no adequate funding identified by Government for meaningful marine park management, we run the real risk of losing sustainable South Australian fisheries production for no net conservation, or economic gain," said Mr Phillips.

"The marine park process has already had a detrimental effect on the industry here creating an uncertain business environment which has certainly cost the State investment income.

"If we don't get this right, South Australia will lose out with further job losses, loss of economic wealth from commercial and recreational fishing and further loss of food security."

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