

Media Release



The Tasmanian National Parks Association calls for Marine Protected Areas to be representative conservation reserves managed as National Parks

The Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) strongly supports the establishment of a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Bruny Bioregion and calls for these to be managed as National Parks.

The Bruny Bioregion is recognised as being globally significant - at least 60% of marine species in temperate Australia are not found anywhere else. It is also internationally recognised for its superb diving locations and unique marine communities.

“MPAs should, therefore, be managed for the protection and conservation of their exceptional biodiversity in the same way as terrestrial National Parks,” said Anne McConnell, president of the TNPA. “If MPAs are managed by Primary Industry they are seen as being principally for commercial exploitation and there is a high risk of conflict of interest in management.”

“Mr Llewellyn’s extraordinary statement that the government would not agree to recommendations [for MPAs] that would adversely affect fishers is an example of this - as well as discriminating against divers and other tourist operators,” said Ms McConnell. “This fishing-protection approach has also been the driver for the RPDC's dramatic reduction in the number and nature of MPAs it has recommended in its final report – falling far short of the commitment made by all State governments to protect Australia’s marine ecosystems.”

Major scientific reviews have demonstrated that fishing activities do threaten marine biodiversity – through overfishing, bycatch and habitat destruction. The establishment of MPAs provides reference sites and protects spawning populations which are important for the long-term health of both commercial and recreational fisheries – a point often neglected by fishers themselves.

14th April 2008

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