



NATIONAL SEAFOOD INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

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Announcement of new marine reserves network premature

The National Seafood Industry Alliance has labelled today's declaration of the new Commonwealth marine reserves network as "premature".

"Government has not assessed the true impacts of these reserves on the fishing industry, the businesses supporting Australia's seafood industry, or the 100 communities around Australia that will be directly impacted," said National Seafood Industry Alliance Chair, Mr Grahame Turk.

"The Government has stated that the commercial fishing industry is the sector most affected as a direct result of the displacement of commercial fishing by the marine reserves, as well as indirect impacts on upstream and downstream land based industries." Mr Turk said.

"Regional communities should be very concerned as an independent report by Ernst & Young of the government's claim about minimal impact has been found to be plainly wrong." said Mr Turk.

"The Ernst and Young report confirms industry concerns that the impacts have been grossly underestimated.

The report highlighted inadequate assessment of a range of impacts on the fishing industry, downstream processing industry, the cost (to taxpayers) associated with implementing the new reserves or to consider the benefits in terms of improved environmental and conservation outcomes.

"The report found there was no basis on which to assess whether the benefits of the Government's proposal would likely outweigh the costs." Mr Turk said.

"Given this, the limitations of the proposed adjustment assistance are more glaring."

"The seafood industry in Australia is extremely disappointed that our concerns have not been properly addressed nor have the costs and benefits been adequately assessed," said Mr Turk.

"We support appropriate marine conservation initiatives, such as marine reserves. However, these should only be implemented where the true costs and benefits have been clearly accounted for. It is regrettable for Australia that this has not happened," said Mr Turk.

For a copy of the Ernst and Young report visit www.seafoodforaustralia.com

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MEMBERS OF NATIONAL SEAFOOD INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

