



The Australian Coral Reef Society Inc

A society promoting the scientific study of Australian coral reefs

ACRS Correspondence
c/-Biological Sciences
The University of Queensland
St Lucia QLD 4072 Australia

austcoralreefsoc@gmail.com
www.australiancoralreefsociety.org

Media Release: Australian Coral Reef Society rejects decision to abandon sanctuary zones in proposed Sydney Marine Park

The Australian Coral Reef Society (ACRS), the world's oldest professional organisation of coral-reef scientists and managers, strongly opposes the NSW Governments backflip on marine protection.

Dr Anna Scott (ACRS President) stated "Sanctuary zones are crucial for marine protection as they provide a refuge from fishing pressures, which are a major threat to marine ecosystems. The NSW Fisheries Minister's removal of no-take sanctuary zones from the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion represents a retrograde step in ocean protection". She also noted, "Only 2.4 % of coastal waters was allocated for high level protection, whereas the Great Barrier Reef has 30% no-take, which is considered appropriate by international bodies such as the IUCN".

Professor David Booth (ACRS Councillor) added: "The NSW coast has a number of fragile coral habitats, and these are under threat from climate change and fishing, amongst other pressures. Both commercial and recreational fishing, for instance, degrade fish stocks and generate large amounts of marine debris, including nets and monofilament lines".

The public consultation process for the marine park extends to September 27th, but the Minister has stated that no-take areas will no longer be considered in the plan, before the consultation period has even finished.

ACRS urge him to reconsider in favour of an open and evidence-based decision process, and to return to a process that works towards providing adequate protection for the unique coastal and marine communities of NSW.

Contacts

Dr Anna Scott
President, Australian Coral Reef Society
M 0421 181 484

Prof David Booth
ACRS Councillor
M 0427 499 649

President:	Dr. Anna Scott; Tel: 02 6648 3923; Email: Anna.Scott@scu.edu.au
Vice-President:	Dr. Sarah Hamylton; Tel: 02 4221 3589; Email: shamylto@uow.edu.au
Hon Secretary:	Ms. Carrie Sims; Tel: 0408 710 175; Email: c.sims@uq.edu.au
Hon Treasurer:	Dr. Stephanie Duce; Tel: 07 4781 5476; Email: stephanie.duce@jcu.edu.au