

Government changes its tune on marine parks?

28 February 2023

Key Point

- State and Commonwealth Ministers have recently committed to conserve 30% of Australia's marine areas by 2030
- This appears contrary to the Government's former position of a "moratorium" on the creation of new marine parks
- Environment groups are cautiously optimistic that it signals a move towards a more contemporary stance on environmental issues.

Details

In a joint communique issued by Commonwealth, State and Territory Environment Ministers on 21 October 2022, it was agreed that, *"In recognition of the scale and urgency of environmental challenges, ministers agreed: 1. To work collectively to achieve a national target to protect and conserve 30% of Australia's landmass and 30% of Australia's marine areas by 2030."*

The previous commitment of the Gutwein and Hodgman Governments was to a "moratorium" on the creation of new marine parks. This was renewed as late as February 2021.

"We hope that this signals a move away from the acrimony of past environmental debates and that Tasmanians can now have an open discussion about this overdue change". said Michael Jacques, coordinator of the marine park campaigning group "Tasmanians for Marine Parks".

"We have asked the Minister to tell us how and when this promise will be given meaningful effect in inshore State waters. Without adequately protecting Tasmanian inshore waters this promise is meaningless", he said.

The group is already preparing proposed new areas to get the conversation started and is planning Statewide consultation sessions. "We will help as much as we can to get a respectful conversation going that balances the needs of all stakeholders in Tasmania".

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

I am writing to you on behalf of Tasmanians for Marine Parks, a campaign of Marine Life Network Inc.

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Copy of the joint communique can be found at

<https://www.dceew.gov.au/about/news/stay-informed/communiques#environment-ministers-meeting>