

Grievance - MARINE PARKS – 23 February 2011

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:46): I rise today to talk about the sham of the marine parks process in this state that this government is imposing on its citizens. I just want to go through some of the information about how fisheries are managed in this state and I do this as the shadow fisheries spokesman.

Fisheries are managed under the Fisheries Management Act 2007 and part of the process is to conserve and manage aquatic resources, protect aquatic habitat and ecosystems, and share access so the whole community gain the maximum possible benefit and foster recreational and commercial fishing activities. Some of the management principles of fisheries are to protect juveniles to ensure future recruitment to the fishable biomass, protection from growth overfishing, protect adequate fraction of the adult biomass to ensure sufficient reproduction of new recruits, protection from recruitment overfishing, protect nursery grounds and critical habitat to ensure long-term fish stock health, and to protect against economic overfishing and overcapitalisation.

In the fisheries management tools that are used for this process, the input controls are limited entry, gear and boat restrictions, closures, time, area (including aquatic reserves) and zoning. There are also output controls that are put in place: size limits, bag and boat limits, protection of spawning females and quotas. With recreational fishing, we also have size limits, bag and boat limits, gear restrictions, area and seasonal closures.

Yet what we have here is the Minister for Environment and a department—and I fear the department are driving this—driving a process of marine parks with absolutely no science. It was admitted at the local area group meeting that I attended at Victor Harbour the other day that they drew some lines on the map. We have been told we need 10 per cent of the state's shoreline to be sanctuary zones, which equates to 25 per cent of the marine park area, and the marine parks cover 44 per cent of our coastline.

There is no science or peer review being put into this process. There is no money available for displaced effort for fishers. I am pretty sure the minister has disbanded the displaced effort working group because there is no money in the budget. We have aquatic reserves already in place along the coast lines that are not policed properly now. People are being forced to make submissions on sanctuary zones on a false premise.

The best quote I heard at the LAG meeting came from someone whose identity I will keep to myself but who knows darn well how to manage fish and is a very good operator. He put a submission in because he would 'rather have a broken arm than get shot in the head'—that is what he is talking about. He would rather try to do what he can with the false premise information he has got than get completely bowled over by the process.

There are no regional impact statements being completed. Some of these zoning plans are just absolutely ridiculous, especially in relation to the proposed fishing of cockles or pipis along the beaches near Goolwa, where there is discussion about whether there is a four kilometre fishing zone and then a four kilometre non-fishing zone.

I think the government wants to be very, very careful about what is going on here and I can detect division between the Minister for Fisheries and the Minister for Environment.

What we are seeing here is the environment department and the minister taking over control of fisheries, which are effectively managed under the Fisheries Management Act and the Aquaculture Act. We have some of the best managed fisheries in the world and it is time that the government took notice of that instead of putting fanciful lines on maps with absolutely no science and forcing people to come up with submissions on an absolutely false premise. It has no idea what it is doing. It has admitted that it has just put these lines on maps and then it wants consultation, but it says, 'We have to have 25 per cent of the marine parks and sanctuary zones.' Where does that number come from? There is absolutely no science. It is going to destroy the fishing sectors in this state. It is going to destroy the tourism sectors. It is going to destroy regional economies, not that this government cares, because it is intent on destroying the economy of the South-East over the forward sale of forests. The morale down in Mount Gambier is just terrible, I have heard. The government needs to stand up and listen and the Minister for Fisheries need to regain control of the situation.