



Northern Prawn Fishery shocked by Burke's marine reserve network

The Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) industry is in shock over the Gillard government's announcement on the marine reserve network in the North and North West regions. NPF Industry Pty Ltd CEO Annie Jarrett said "The proclamation of the North region marine reserve networks will effectively shut down 20% of the managed area of the NPF. In particular, trawler operators will be denied access to highly productive tiger and banana prawn grounds in the Mornington Island area. The future supply of wild caught sustainable prawns to Australian consumers from this fishery will be reduced as a result of this politically-driven, indiscriminate action by the Gillard government".

Last week the Northern Prawn Fishery - Australia's most iconic, remote and valuable prawn fishery - was awarded certification against the world's highest independent acknowledgement of fishery sustainability - the global Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) eco-certification. The NPF is the first tropical prawn fishery in the world to gain MSC certification and achieved the second highest score of any MSC certified fishery globally.

Annie Jarrett said "It is ridiculous for Government to ban trawl activities in a fishery with these outstanding environmental credentials. Clearly the Gillard Government is intent on ignoring widespread international regard for the successful management of Australian fisheries in the rollout of the Commonwealth marine reserve network.

"We support science-based marine protected areas but there is absolutely no need for the marine reserve network to cover 40% of Australia's waters. Furthermore the impacts of the marine reserves on the fishing industry and regional communities around the country have been vastly underestimated.

"Australian's love their seafood, and in particular, they love their home grown prawns. We have tried to work with government to achieve conservation outcomes and to minimise impacts on the commercial fishing industry in the North - but to no avail. All I can say is - buy your MSC NPF certified prawns this Xmas – they may not be as available in years to come"

Contacts:

Annie Jarrett **0411426469**
Andy Prendergast **0427424027**