

Minister David Speirs  
Department for Environment and Water  
GPO Box 1047  
ADEALIDE SA 5001

24 July 2020

Dear Minister Speirs

### **Proposed Changes to South Australian Marine Parks**

I write to you as the Chair of the Minister's Recreational Fishing Advisory Council (MRFAC) to provide a submission on behalf of the recreational fishing community of South Australia on the proposed changes to numerous Marine Parks and sanctuary zones.

In order to provide a submission that represents the broader view of the recreational fishing community, the MRFAC chose to facilitate our own public consultation process through a targeted survey on the proposed changes to Marine Parks. The Marine Park review survey was open from Friday 29 May 2020 - Thursday 25 June 2020.

Thank you for granting the MRFAC an extra two weeks to consult with recreational fishers about this important reform.

298 South Australian recreational fishers participated in our survey which had the following results:

St Francis/Nuyts Reef – **51% neutral**; 30% supportive; 19% opposed

North Neptune – **46% neutral**; 37% supportive; 17% opposed

Clinton Wetlands - 37% neutral; **39% supportive**; 24% opposed

Cape du Couedic – **53% neutral**; 30% supportive; 17% opposed

Coorong Beach – 28% neutral; **61% supportive**; 11% opposed

Consequently, the MRFAC is supportive of the proposed changes.

It is also worth noting 93% of respondents believed there has been no change in their fishing experience, or it is worse than prior to the introduction of sanctuary zones in 2013.

In addition, 93% of respondents believed there was no change, or less fish now than when the sanctuary zones were introduced.

We also provide the following additional commentary on these:

#### St Francis/Nuyts

- The MRFAC believes both of these sanctuary zones are unnecessary, as weather and conditions restrict fishing activities naturally.
- There is no evidence, be it scientific, anecdotal or effort related, for the basis in creating offshore sanctuary areas of the Nuyts Archipelago marine park.
- The proposed changes enables fishers to undertake overnight trips to Nuyts Reef and provides shelter while fishing. Ideally the opening of south east of Cannan reef for trolling would be preferred.

#### North Neptune

- There are too many restrictions on fishing for local recreational anglers
- Opening up areas of the North Neptunes allows fishers to fish areas of the Neptunes without forcing them to make the longer, potentially more dangerous trip to South Neptunes.
- There are limited safe anchorages offshore in SA, so forcing fishers to not use certain safe harbours because it is a sanctuary zone is dangerous.

#### Cape du Couedic

- The MRFAC believes there is low pressure from fishing in this area, so is supportive of the change but does not understand the rationale for banning recreational anglers in the remaining area.
- The MRFAC would prefer to explore the many alternate management options available - for example, making recreational drift fishing and trolling available where bottom structure is of concern, making areas open to fishing for fin fish only where shark protection is of concern, allowing non-extractive catch and release fishing, etc.

A summary of the results of the MRFAC survey are provided in Attachment A for your reference.

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. If you wish to discuss this further the MRFAC are able to be contacted through the email address provided below.



Regards (on behalf of the MRFAC),

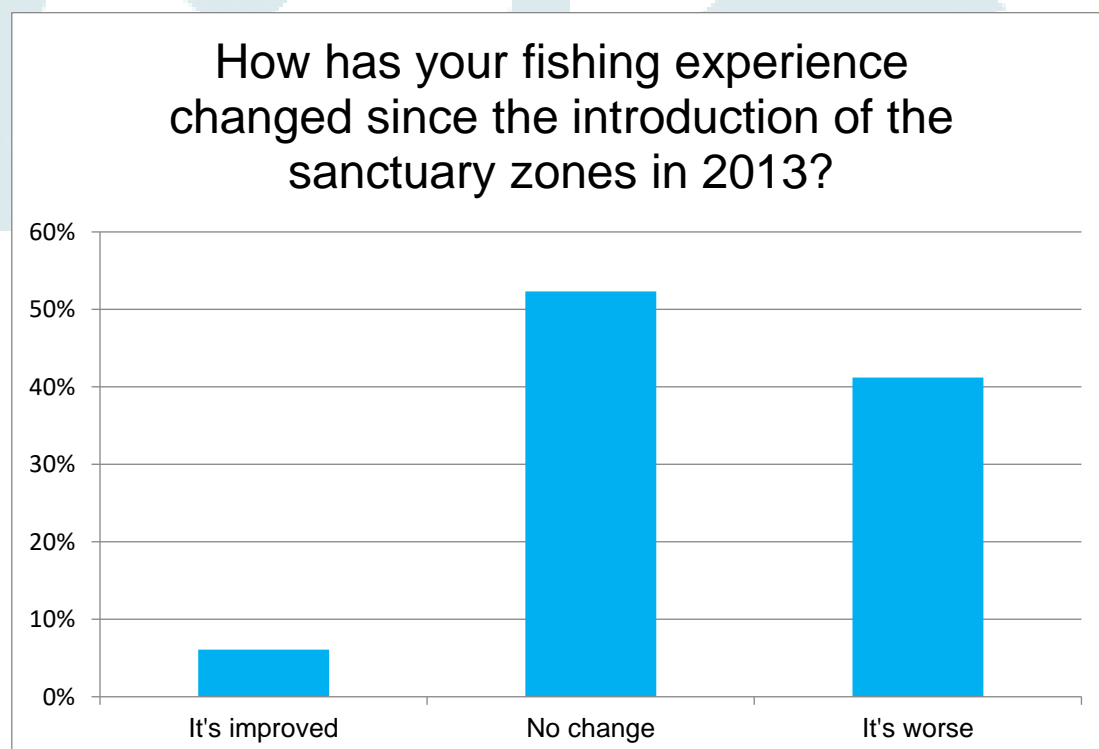
Graham Keegan  
Chair, Minister's Recreational Fishing Advisory Council  
[PIRSA.MRFAC@sa.gov.au](mailto:PIRSA.MRFAC@sa.gov.au)

## Attachment A - MRFAC Marine Park Review Report on Survey Results

Responses	% completion rate
306	73

### How has your fishing experience changed since the introduction of Sanctuary Zones?

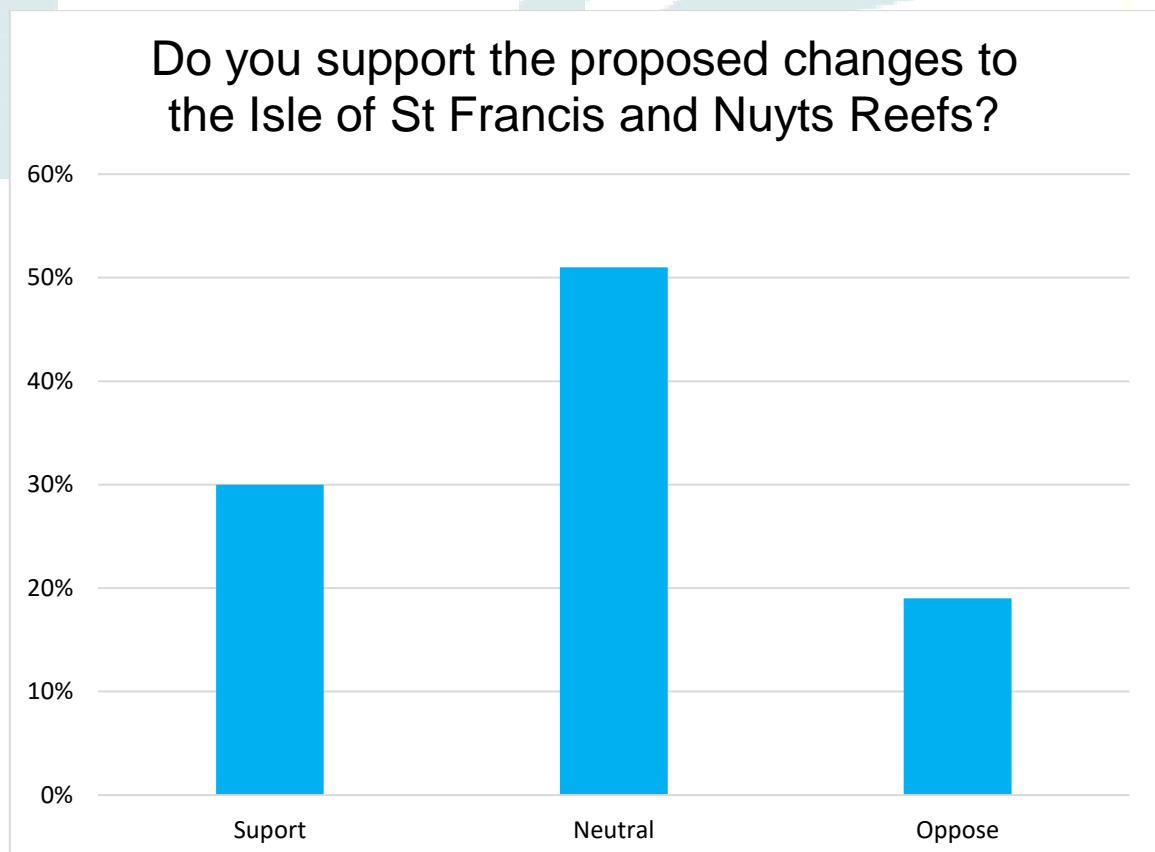
It's improved	6%		17
No Change	52%		146
It's worse	41%		115
Answered	279		
Skipped	27		



**Do you support the proposed changes to the Isle of St Francis and Nuyts Reefs?**

Strongly Support	12%		32
Support	18%		47
Neutral	51%		135
Oppose	8%		20
Strongly Oppose	11%		30

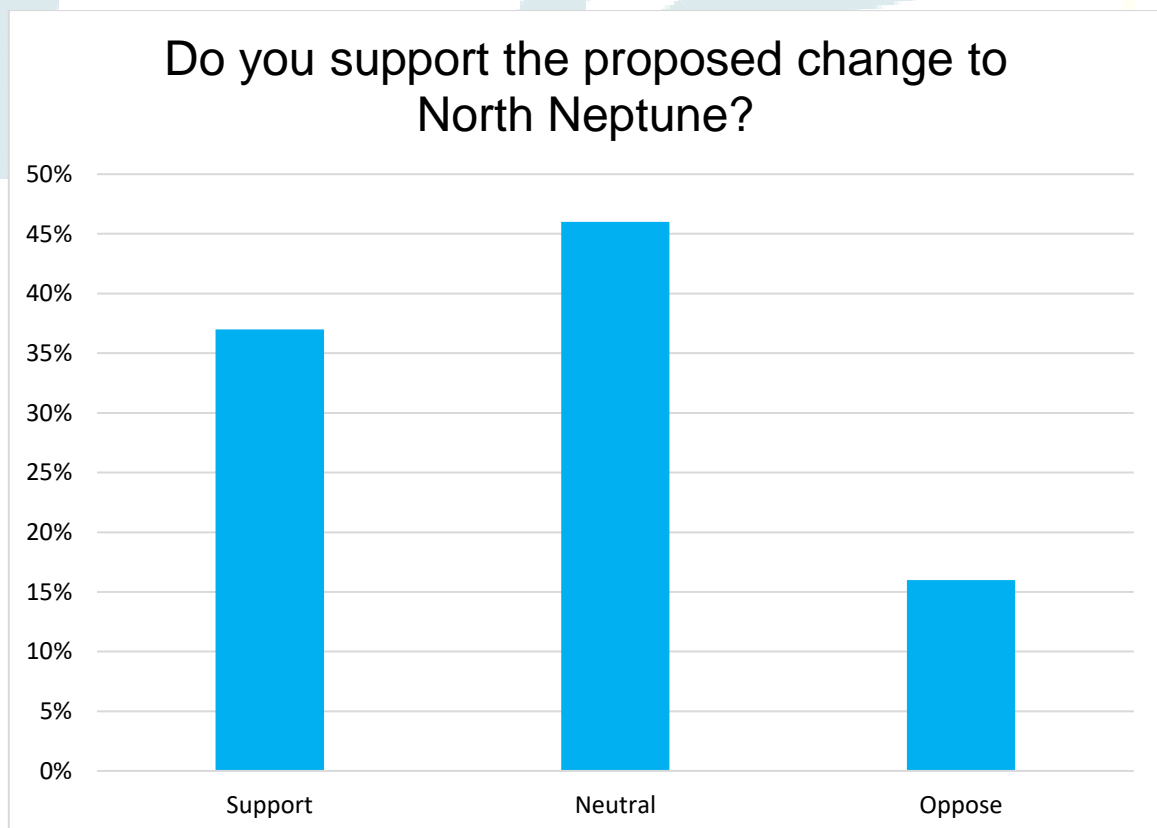
Additional comments provided in support of change	Additional comments provided in opposition of change
I opens that place up again to overnight trips and provides shelter while fishing	There is no evidence, be it scientific, anecdotal or effort related, for the offshore sanctuary areas of the Nuyts Archipelago marine park; Proposed changes will decrease areas that I fish; Would prefer to have access to Cannan Reef



**Do you support the proposed changes to North Neptune?**

Strongly Support	12%		30
Support	25%		63
Neutral	46%		116
Oppose	10%		24
Strongly Oppose	7%		17

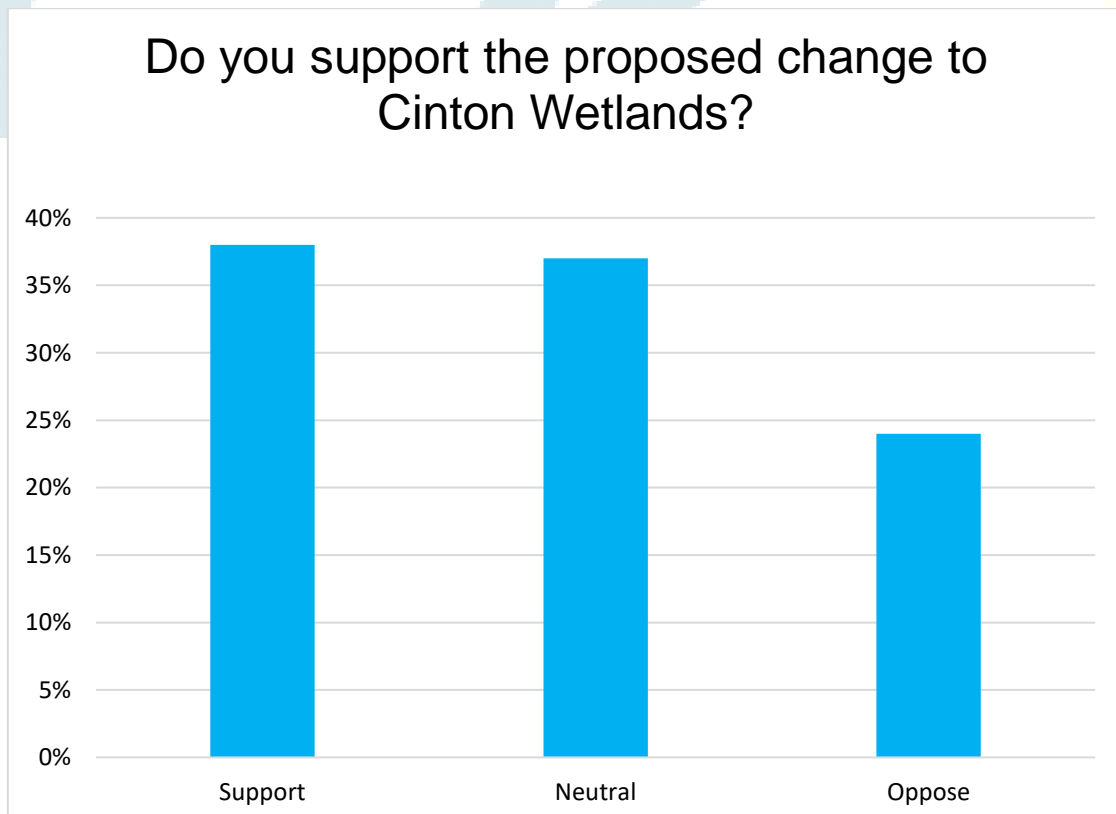
Additional comments provided in support of change	Additional comments provided in opposition of change
Opening up areas of the North Neptunes allows fishers to fish areas of the Neptunes without forcing them to make the longer, potentially more dangerous trip to South Neptunes; It's a good safe anchorage point in an area where that is limited	Less places to fish where I used to enjoy fishing



**Do you support the proposed changes to Clinton Wetlands?**

Strongly Support	13%		31
Support	25%		61
Neutral	37%		90
Oppose	12%		28
Strongly Oppose	12%		30

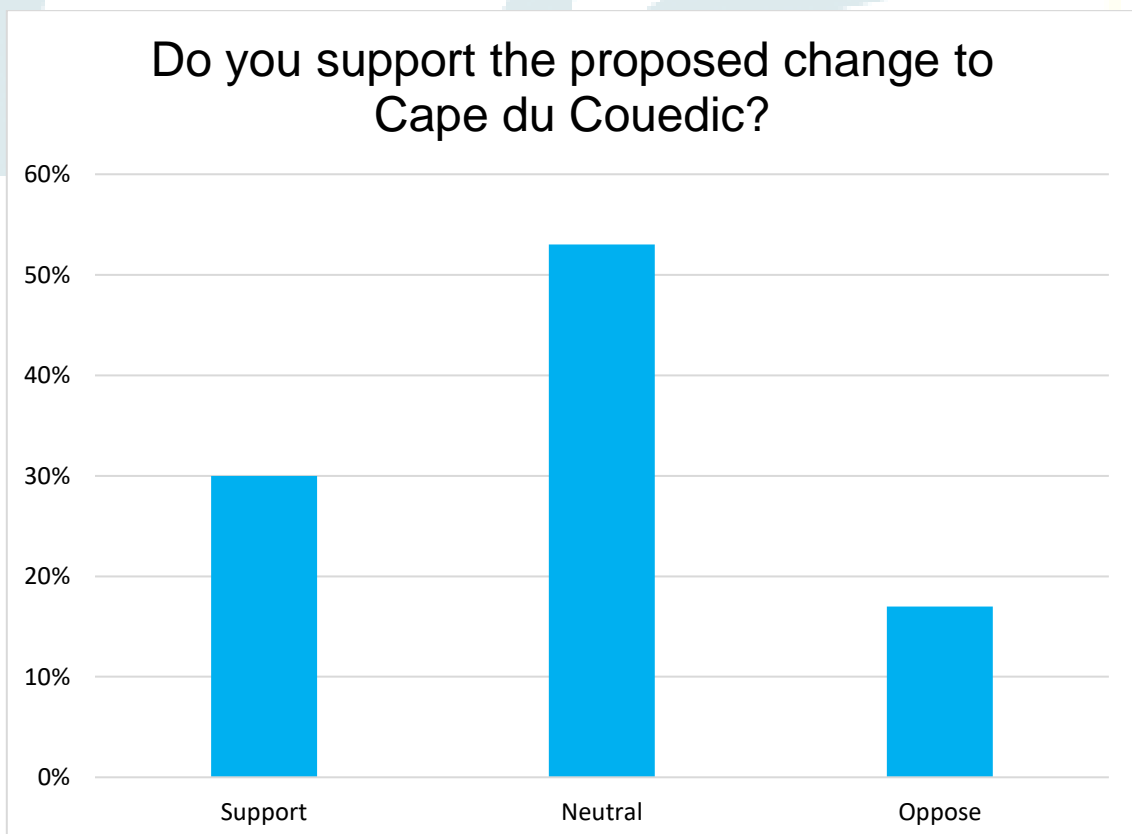
Additional comments provided in support of change	Additional comments provided in opposition of change
This was the greatest injustice of them all and the change is long overdue; Allow some fishing for the locals	This area is one of the few that will help protect fish numbers. It is a breeding ground, and an area where multiple varieties of marine animals start their life; Commercial fishing has already depleted fish stocks so leaving the current sanctuary zone in place is critical.



### Do you support the proposed changes to Cape du Couedic?

Strongly Support	7%		16
Support	23%		54
Neutral	53%		125
Oppose	8%		19
Strongly Oppose	9%		21

Additional comments provided in support of change	Additional comments provided in opposition of change
Difficult area to access for most fishermen so impact should hopefully be minimal; Shouldn't be a locked out area at all. This zone receives little to any fishing pressure and isn't under any threat from recreational fishing at all.	Leave it as is. It needs to be protected from exploitation; Backing onto a national park, this area should include a robust SZ; Very few people would fish here so leave as a sanctuary



### Do you support the proposed changes to Coorong Beach?

Strongly Support	29%		68
Support	32%		74
Neutral	28%		66
Oppose	6%		13
Strongly Oppose	5%		12

Additional comments provided in support of change	Additional comments provided in opposition of change
There is no scientific reason for this sanctuary zone to exist, It was simply a box ticking exercise; Support opening to recreational fishing from beach only; Shore based fishing is low impact	I am cautious to support this because it appears there are many areas for shore based fishing either side of the area. No fishing should be allowed at all due to the damage caused to dunes and vital ecosystems; Ban Commercial net fishers

