

TURNING THE TIDE

Winter 2014, Volume 15#1



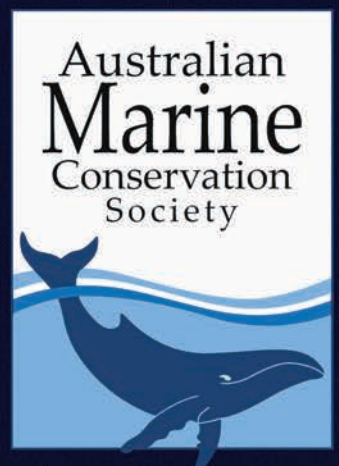
Latest on the Shark Cull

Victory for Whales!

Fighting for the Reef

Save our Top End Seas

**Defending our
Marine Sancturries**



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From the **DIRECTOR**
Darren Kindleysides



WHEN IS NOTHING something?

Something incredible will happen this November. And that something is...nothing. Or an absence of something, that has happened every summer for the last 67 years. Something that has bloodied Antarctic waters, caused conflict on the high seas and soured relationships between some of the most influential nations on Earth.

For the first time since 1946, Japan will not hunt whales in the Southern Ocean. For the first time in 67 years the whales of the Antarctic will be spared the harpoon.

In previous years the Japanese whaling fleet has steamed south to catch whales in the vast Southern Ocean. The fleet embarks on a round trip that normally takes four months and the lives of hundreds of whales.

This year there will be nothing. The fleet will remain tied up.

In March the highest court in the world brought an end to the Government of Japan's whaling program in the Southern Ocean. In a damning judgment, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Japan must immediately stop its so-called 'scientific' whaling program in the Antarctic.

The Court confirmed what many of us have said for many years – that Japan's 'scientific' whaling is illegal, breaches international treaties and laws, and is little more than commercial whaling wrapped up in the lab coat of science. The ICJ saw through the whalers' arguments.

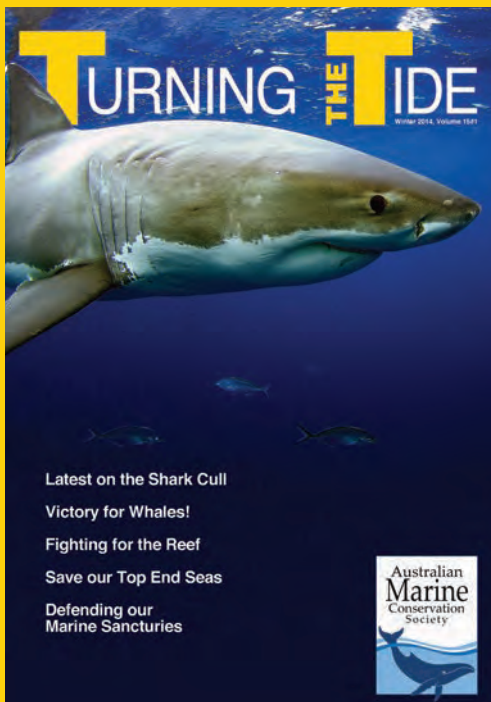
Whales have become a symbol of how human society can change for the better. And Australia has always led the way. In 1979 we were one of the first countries to ban whaling in our own waters; in the 1980s we led the charge bringing countries from across the globe together to agree on a world-wide ban on commercial whaling; and now, when no others would step up, we took the courageous step of taking Japan to the highest court in the world.

It's true, our marine life is still under siege – think of the hypocrisy of taking Japan to court over whaling while the WA Government culls sharks. But we should take heart from this landmark decision of the ICJ. It is totemic and it is a triumph for belief and perseverance.

When we started campaigning for international legal action against Japan almost a decade ago, many said it wouldn't happen, or that if it did happen we wouldn't win.

For many of us, there hasn't been a year of our lives when whales have not been hunted in the Antarctic Ocean. When the fleet stays in port in November at the start of the 2014-15 whaling season, we must make sure it's for good.

For now, the whales of the Antarctic are safe, and as achievements go, that's far from nothing.



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From the **PRESIDENT** Craig McGovern

It's fair to say we have a battle on our hands.

The world's largest coal port has been approved on the Great Barrier Reef coast and management plans for Australia's network of offshore marine parks remained stalled.

Despite this, I am not exaggerating when I write that at AMCS we are more optimistic than ever. And this is in no small part, down to you. Against all odds, against the might of multinational mining companies, people from around the country and across the sea are rising. Big industry's dollars are no match for the passion of Australians united to protect our Reef. Small businesses, boaties, fishers, divers, grandmothers, school kids and parents are rallying, united in their disbelief that our Great Barrier Reef is being treated with such disdain.

And thousands upon thousands of Australians, from New South Wales and Queensland in particular, are speaking out to save our protected marine sanctuaries from being repealed (read the good news on p16).

Australians have united around the nation to speak out in defence of sharks, which are being targeted and killed in Western Australia and further afield. As always, Australians' passion on shark conservation knows no limits (see p14).

The revised and updated Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide will soon be released, in website, hardcopy and as a smart phone app (iPhone and Android).

And of course, we are buoyed by the positive news that the world's highest court, the International Court of Justice has forbidden Japan's whaling program

in the Southern Ocean. Victories are hard won throughout history, and we should take pause to acknowledge the significance of this, which is explained in detail on page six.

We've recently mailed out our Fight for the Reef Appeal. If you have already donated, thank you. If you haven't, please consider it. This campaign is bigger than an ocean and even if it's past June 30, it's not too late to chip in to this critical appeal.

We are delighted as always to share stories of our wonderful supporters. We were sad but inspired by a young woman (p18) who recently lost her life, but her memory lives on. Thank you as always for your support for our work. It's a privilege to work on your behalf, for the oceans, and for life on this beautiful blue planet.

OUT OF THE

News from around our shores

SUPERTRAWLER BAN UPHELD

in court, but proponents still trying

In 2012, Seafish Tasmania attempted to bring a supertrawler into Australian waters to fish in the Commonwealth-managed Small Pelagic Fishery. They were met by a storm of disapproval from fishers, conservationists and the broader Australian public, and the supertrawler was temporarily banned.

Seafish Tasmania challenged the former Labor Government's decision in the courts, but in February 2014, the Federal Court upheld the decision to ban the supertrawler.

The ban on supertrawlers finishes in November 2014. The Coalition Government has indicated they will not allow supertrawlers access to Australian fishing grounds, but has not yet committed to a permanent, legislated ban. Stay tuned...

Margiris Super Trawler
© Gleizes and Greenpeace



Shark art in Erskineville
Sydney. © Thomas Jackson



"LISTEN TO FACTS
LISTEN TO SCIENCE
LISTEN TO REASON"

Ricky Gervais



The latest on the

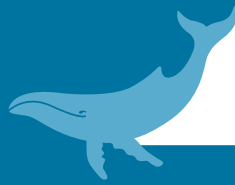
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SHARK CULL

The WA Government placed 72 baited drumlines 1km offshore from popular beaches from 25 January until 30 April 2014. In this time, 68 sharks drowned on the hooks or were deliberately killed. Fifty of these sharks were the target size (over three metres in length). The rest were smaller sharks, considered collateral damage.

The WA Government is proposing to continue the cull during the summer months for the next three years. The proposal is currently being considered by the WA Environmental Protection Agency. The Federal Environment Minister, Greg Hunt, announced on 7 May 2014 that the proposal requires assessment under federal environmental law. However, the WA Government will be conducting the assessment.

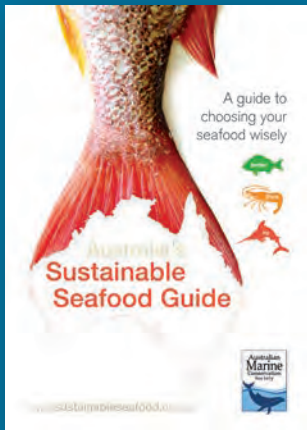
Spot the conflict of interest?!

BLUE



Check us out on twitter for live updates & news: @AustMarConsSoc

Coming soon... **AUSTRALIA'S SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD GUIDE!**



Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide was the country's first ever consumer guide designed to help Australians make responsible seafood choices. The Guide is currently being updated and revamped, to help Australians make informed choices and keep plenty of fish in the sea.

With a more detailed assessment process and more information on fish and fisheries, the new Guide will be a must have! And we're excited to announce that for the first time, the Guide will be available as an app for Android smart phones (as well as the currently available formats for iPhone, online and in hard copy).

... And for the first time ever we are offering a unique chance to be a part of **CUTTING EDGE CONSERVATION**



Give a Fish and donate to Australia's Sustainable Seafood Guide. You can sponsor a snapper, help a herring or give a quid for a squid. Your donation will help drive the change towards sustainable seafood.

Visit marineconservation.org.au/giveafish to be part of this independent, fearless, peer-reviewed Guide.



New Marine Park **IN NEW CALEDONIA**

New Caledonia has just declared the world's largest marine park in their part of the Coral Sea. This new blue sea sanctuary will cover 1.3 million square kilometres and will protect coral reefs, marine mammals, shark species, nesting birds, sea turtles and many, many fish!

AMCS is overjoyed to see New Caledonia taking proactive steps to protect such a pristine place, rather than waiting until it's under threat. Australia was tantalizingly close to protecting our part of the Coral Sea, but plans have been put on hold by the Australian Government.



Thanks to everyone who joined us at the Trashed film fundraiser in Darwin and Melbourne.

TRASHED Screenings

AMCS recently hosted two charity screenings of Trashed, the award-winning documentary feature film about the pressing global environmental issue of waste.

Trashed is a powerful film that questions where our waste goes. Or as the New York Times put it: "that plastic bottle in your hand will feel as dangerous as a molotov cocktail."

The screenings were held in Melbourne and Darwin, and both helped raised much needed funds to help us protect our precious oceans.

Thanks to everyone who joined us for Trashed, and keep your eyes peeled for our marine plastics video coming soon!



International Court of Justice **HARPOONS WHALERS**

Over 10,000 minke whales have been killed in the Southern Ocean under the guise of science
© Xanthe Rivett

by Darren Kindleysides,
AMCS Director



On the 31st March 2014, the highest court on the planet delivered a blistering rebuff to the Government of Japan, exposing once and for all the sham of killing whales for “research” in the Southern Ocean.

Over the last 25 years, more than 10,000 whales have been killed in the Southern Ocean by Japanese whalers under the guise of ‘research’. The ruling by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), that Japan’s ‘scientific’ whaling program (known as ‘JARPA II’) breaks international law and must cease immediately, brings at least a temporary halt to the slaughter.

Many were surprised at the comprehensive nature of the ICJ’s judgement, which was heavily critical of the Government of Japan. It was a thorough dismantling of their flimsy scientific justification for setting quotas of almost 1000 Antarctic whales a year. It questioned why Japan hadn’t attempted to undertake non-lethal whale research and concluded that the whaling program was commercial in nature.

It is perhaps the strongest finding by the ICJ on an environmental issue.

The judgement is vindication for Australia’s decision to stand up to Japan through the International Courts and for all the hard work put in across government departments to mount a formidable case.

The judgement is also vindication for the tens of thousands of Australians – including many, many AMCS supporters - who encouraged our government to take the Japanese Government to court. The case would never have happened without this public backing.

The judgments of the ICJ have binding force and are without appeal for the parties concerned. Japan has announced they will comply with the ruling and will not be sending their whaling fleet to the Southern Ocean at the end of this year. However, the Government of Japan has said they will

propose a new whaling program for summer 2015-16.

The ICJ has set many hurdles that Japan would need to clear, if they are to return to Southern Ocean whaling. The whalers also face challenges at home. This case has been an embarrassment to Japan on international and domestic fronts. Public opposition to whaling is building in Japan. The fleet is heavily and unpopularly subsidised and the consumption of whale meat is falling.

The ICJ’s ruling presents an opportunity for the Government of Japan to draw a line under their Antarctic whaling history. If they fail to seize this opportunity, then it will fall once again to countries like Australia to stand up for the whales. But for now, we should celebrate. This is a just and wonderful outcome, of which we should all be proud.



By Felicity Wishart,
Great Barrier Reef
Campaign Director

The **FIGHT FOR THE REEF** heads to the Courts

When Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt approved a new coal port terminal and 3 million cubic metres of dredging and dumping at Abbot Point just 50 km from the Whitsundays, many Australians were horrified.

When the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) issued the dumping permit in the Marine Park this was a step too far. After all, GBRMPA was established to manage and protect the Reef, not monitor its destruction.

Thousands of letters, emails, phone calls, Facebook posts and tweets urging GBRMPA not to dredge or dump in the Reef's waters went unheeded. It's hard not to describe these political and bureaucratic players as impotent, in the face of governments determined to put mining interests ahead of the Reef and its \$6 billion tourism industry.

In a surge of great 'Aussie spirit', the community donated hundreds of thousands of dollars via AMCS, our project partner WWF and GetUp! to challenge these decisions in the courts.

AMCS has been proud to support the Environmental Defenders Office Qld, North Queensland Conservation Council (NQCC), and Mackay Conservation Group (MCG) to launch legal actions.

NQCC is challenging the decision to issue a permit to dump dredge spoil under the Sea Dumping Act. If successful, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal may order that the Sea Dumping Permit is invalid. This would force the North Queensland Bulk Ports (a state government owned corporation) to find an alternative to sea dumping. This case will assess the impact of the dumping on the marine environment and whether other options were adequately assessed.

MCG is challenging Minister Hunt's approval of the dredging under federal

government environmental law. This case will test, amongst other things, whether the Minister upheld his obligations under the World Heritage Convention. The result could have future implications for all world heritage properties.

Despite the odds, the campaign to stop rapid industrial expansion along the Reef grows stronger and more successful by the day.

In the past 12 months, we have seen Glencore Xstrata, BHP Billiton, Anglo-American Coal and Lend Lease all withdraw from Reef port developments. We have also seen the Queensland Government and Queensland Resources Council forced into defensive positions, the latter running TV ads to counter our campaign.

NEWS FLASH! At their Annual World Heritage meeting this June UNESCO has upheld their threat to list the Reef as World Heritage in Danger and heavily criticised government approvals of massive dredging and dumping at Abbot Point.



Above: Diseased juvenile bull shark from Gladstone Harbour 2011.
Main picture: © Greenpeace and Tom Jefferson



By Cherry Muddle,
Great Barrier Reef
Community
Campaigner



It's an easy sell. One of the world's natural wonders. Colourful coral gardens teeming with life, stunning underwater structures, and deserted islands – it's the stuff of postcard dreams and it's the lifeblood of North Queenslanders; which is why Whitsunday locals are determined to protect the Reef.



© Corinn Strickland



Explore Whitsundays and the crew of Southern Cross Sailing Adventures.
© Al Grundy



Marching for the Reef through Cyclone Ita with AMCS campaigner Felicity Wishart (L), Bob Irwin (R) and Whitsunday locals © Corinn Strickland.

Whitsunday Community **FIGHTS FOR THE REEF**

It's been a busy year for the Whitsunday community after Federal Environment Minister Greg Hunt approved the world's largest coal port, 50 kilometres from the idyllic Whitsunday Islands.

Anger and frustration swept through the tourism and dive industries, with major tourism associations taking a public stand against dredging and dumping in the Reef's waters. Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), Dive Queensland, Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO), Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association (WCBIA) and Hamilton Island's CEO all expressed serious concerns. AMPTO president

Col McKenzie called it "an absolute bloody disgrace".

The Fight for the Reef campaign has been going from strength to strength with Whitsunday locals taking the fight into their own hands and forming their own group: Whitsunday Residents Against Dumping (WRAD). WRAD has been busy organising public events, gathering petitions, raising awareness and gaining community support.

Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association (WCBIA) president Tony Brown and local dive operator and Order Of Underwater Coral Heroes (OUCH) founder Tony Fontes flew to Canberra in March. They met with both sides of politics, to call for a ban on dredging and dumping of spoil in the Reef's waters.

On April 13 more than 200 people braved cyclonic conditions and pouring

rain to Rally for the Reef in Airlie Beach. Wildlife warrior Bob Irwin and WRAD spokesperson, eighteen-year-old Brittney Gregory led the march.

Wildlife Warrior and reef champion, Bob Irwin was moved to see the outpouring of support:

"It is amazing to see the younger generations standing up for what they believe in to protect the Reef. Our current government has failed us and failed the Reef. Before I leave this planet I'd like to see the world's most incredible structure protected now and in the future.

"It is up to every single person around the world to stand up and fight, or we won't have a Reef."

Top End **CREATURE FEATURES**

By Samantha Nowland,
Northern Marine
Campaigner



Northern Nemo (*Amphiprion ocellaris*):

our 'Top End clown fish' looks just like a black and white version of 'Nemo'. Unique to our tropical seas, the Northern Nemo is a rare variety of clown fish. Also known as anemone fish, these little beauties make their homes among the stinging tentacles of anemones, from which they are immune due to their protective mucus layer.

Anemone fish are protected from hungry predatory fish and, as payment for rent, they drive off intruders and keep their hosts clean from parasites. Clownfish live in groups within an anemone, with one dominant female and many smaller breeding males. If something happens to the female in a group of clownfish, the largest male of the group will switch his sex to become the new dominant female. The change is irreversible.

Sawfish (family *Pristidae*): are actually modified rays with a shark-like body and gill slits on their under-side. Sawfish get their name from their saw-like rostrum, which is covered with electro-sensitive pores to detect their prey hiding in the sand or sediment of the sea floor. Their rostrum also serves as a digging tool, a weapon to stun and kill prey, and a defense against predators such as sharks. The 'teeth' protruding from the rostrum are not real teeth, but modified tooth-like structures called denticles. The NT is home to four species of sawfish, all of which are vulnerable to extinction.

Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*): are shy, elusive marine mammals that spend their entire lives at sea. Their scientific family name Sirenia refers to the sirens of ancient Greek Mythology and they were often mistaken for mermaids by early European explorers. Dugongs have similar life spans to us, living to around 70 years of age. Dugongs don't bear young until at least seven years old, and only then every 3-6 years. This makes dugongs vulnerable to impacts on their population.

In the Top End we see can dugongs when out sailing, fishing or boating on the Harbour, mostly around Channel Island and Elizabeth River estuary. Dugongs depend almost entirely on seagrass for food, although Darwin is the only known location where they also graze on algae and other plants that grow on shallow rocky reefs.



Darwin Clown Fish.
© Jeffrey Lavoie



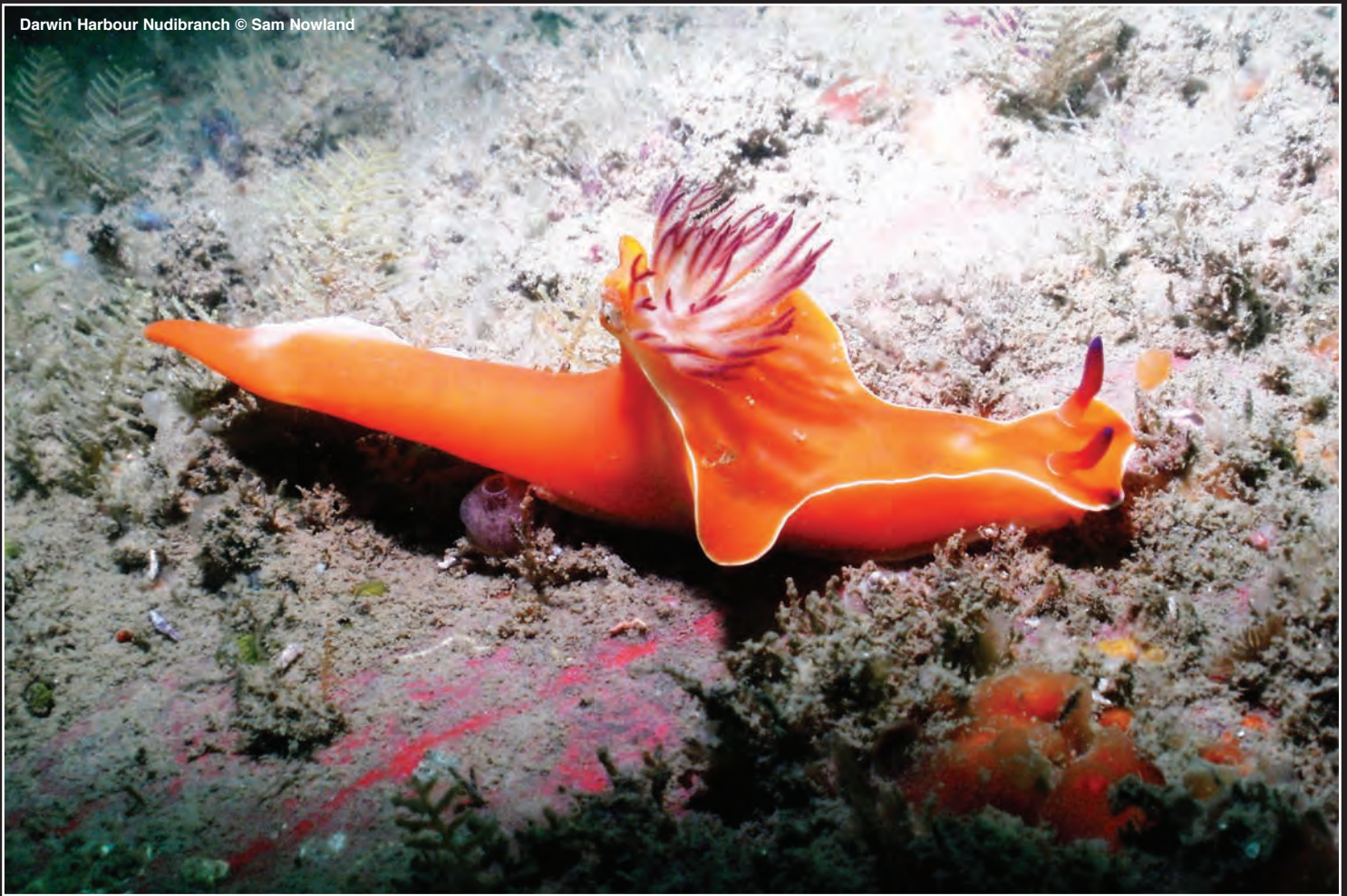
Sawfish © Pete Kyne



Top End residents are lucky enough
to have dugongs in Darwin Harbour



Darwin Harbour Nudibranch © Sam Nowland



Mangroves in the Top End © Glenn Walker



© Xanthe Rivett

Save Our Top

www.marineconserv



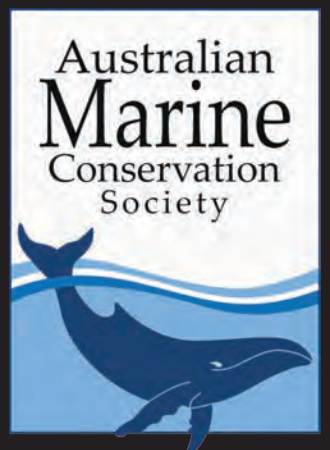
Christmas Tree Worms in the Top End © Xanthe Rivett



© Xanthe Rivett

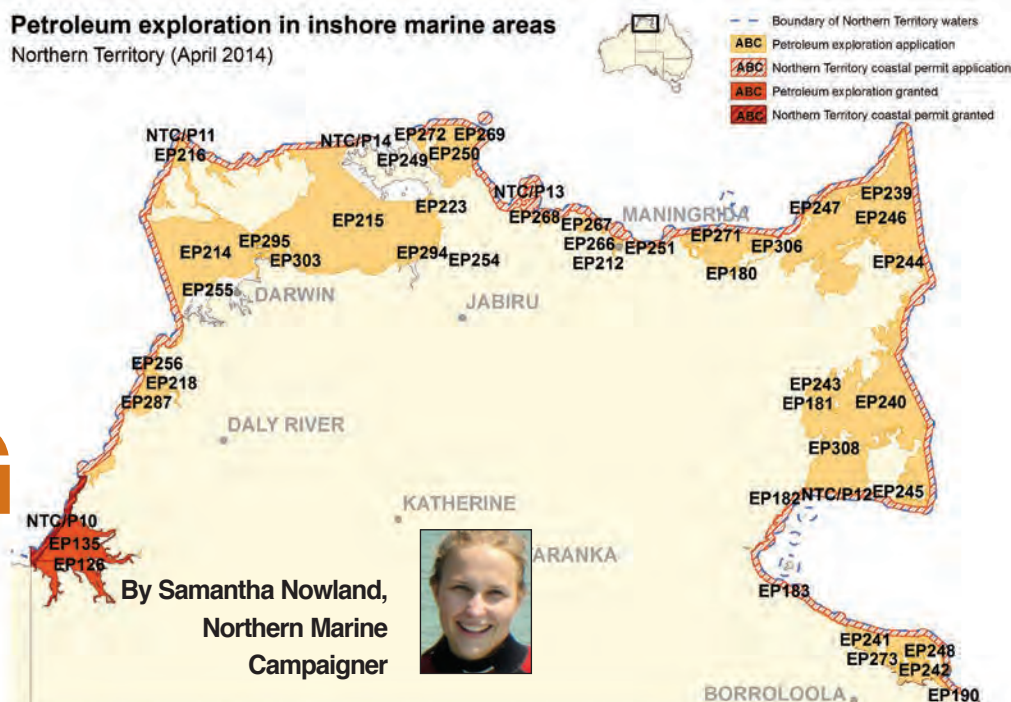
End Seas

ation.org.au



Keep Territory Seas MINING FREE

Petroleum exploration in inshore marine areas Northern Territory (April 2014)



The remote waters of the Northern Territory are a shallow water haven for some of Australia's most glorious tropical sea life. The diversity of habitats in the NT is truly extraordinary. Coastal mangrove forests provide nurseries for a myriad of fish and crustaceans, and constantly filter our water, keeping it clean and full of oxygen. Colourful coral reefs in Darwin Harbour, the Cobourg Peninsula, and along the Arnhem coastline provide homes for hundreds of coral and fish species and feeding grounds for sharks and big fish like snapper and groper.

The NT has some of Earth's highest concentrations of threatened dugongs which feed on the region's plentiful seagrass meadows. Six of the world's seven species of sea turtles inhabit the Territory's waters.

But the Territory's sea life is under threat from big resource companies eyeing off our coastline for oil, gas and seabed mining projects.

Over 90% of the Territory's coastline is covered by petroleum exploration licences or applications, despite these waters including areas of conservation significance.

Exploration means oceans of noise for our marine life. 'Seismic testing' sends sound waves through the seabed, searching for oil, gas and minerals. Sound waves can exceed 200dB (1

million times the safe level for humans). These underwater arrays of air guns are louder than a jackhammer, in fact louder than a jumbo jet taking off.

Our tropical sea life faces not only seismic testing but increased shipping, risk of oil spills and coastal development on an industrial scale.

In response to public concerns about seabed mining plans for the NT, the Government issued a moratorium on seabed mining, but only until 2015.

Seabed mining is a significant and unprecedented threat to Top End sea life. It amounts to strip mining the sea floor and can cause a wide range of environmental problems. It has a history of harming marine life and fish habitat.



International seabed mining projects have identified the disturbance of seafloor sediment as the most significant short-term impact of the industry. Dredging and dumping of the spoil has well-documented and devastating impacts on local sea life including fish breeding and nursery areas and important habitats, causing the death and disruption of seafloor organisms and affecting the ability of plants to photosynthesize.

Visit keepterritoryseasminingfree.org for more information and to take action against marine mining in the Top End.



Be amazed by the **WONDERFUL WORLD OF WHALES**

at the Australian National
Maritime Museum, Sydney

Maritime Museum
© Ingrid Neilson



For almost 50 years, AMCS has been a key player in saving the whales. We've campaigned to stop Australia's commercial whaling operations (the last station closed in Albany in 1978). We've pushed for Australia's Southern Ocean Sanctuary in the 1980s, and we have defended whale feeding and breeding grounds in marine parks. AMCS Director Darren Kindleysides recently played a huge part in convincing the Australian Government to take Japan to the International Court of Justice, which has resulted in great leap forward for whales and humankind.

Recently the Australian National Maritime Museum partnered with AMCS in their exhibition, 'Amazing Whales'. We think it's well worth getting along to see.

'Amazing Whales' is an international exhibition, on until 20 July 2014. This fascinating display uncovers the diversity, origins and adaptation of the cetaceans, charting their development from land mammals to aquatic giants. Amazing Whales also looks at the relationships humans have had with whales, and the threats that weigh on their future.

'Beautiful Whale' runs until 1 February 2015. Come eye-to-eye with whales in this remarkable photographic exhibition. American artist Bryant Austin is the only photographer in the world producing life-size photographs of whales. He spends months with whales off Tonga, Dominica and the Great Barrier Reef where he immerses

himself in the water and remains motionless, waiting for whales to pass less than two metres away from his lens. The result is extraordinarily intimate and illuminates the majesty and spectacle of nature's underwater giants.



Plan your visit at
anmm.gov.au/amazingwhales

Keep Calm and **LOVE SHARKS**

Millions of sharks are killed every year. They are fished, finned, and now culled. If sharks ever needed a positive PR campaign to spruik their importance to our oceans, this is the time!

Since the WA shark cull began, AMCS supporters have been asking us for something they can wear to show

their love of sharks. Here by popular demand, our new Keep Calm and Love sharks shirts are being snapped up!

Funds from these gorgeous t-shirts will help us campaign against the WA shark cull. Stylish and comfortable, these 100% Cotton t-shirts are also environmentally friendly and 100% sweat shop free.



Visit our online shop marineconservation.org.au or call 1800 066 299 to buy a Keep Calm and Love Sharks shirt.
Many thanks to Josie Jones for donating the design.





sharksafe.org.au

BAITED DRUM
LINES RISK
KILLING MORE
THAN SHARKS.

THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO
KEEP OUR BEACHES SAFE.

THIS MESSAGE BROUGHT TO YOU BY CONCERNED LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND:



by Tooni Mahto,
Marine Campaigner



The politics of a **SHARK CULL**

“Our nation was at the forefront of global change in attitudes toward the slaughter of whales and dolphins. Cetaceans are charismatic; they have lungs and voices. But sharks are silent. They too, are social, but they need others to speak for them”.
Tim Winton, AMCS Patron.

We all want our kids to be safe, whether catching the bus to school or swimming in the sea. So we have road safety laws to try to bring down our terrible road toll and we teach our kids to swim so they can play safely in the water.

These public safety measures have proven results. They work. But randomly killing sharks is a pointless, wasteful shame.

At a cost of a million dollars, Western Australian premier Colin Barnett has put in unscientific policies to kill sharks that come within one kilometre of the state's beaches. This will not guarantee peoples' safety, but it is already damaging our oceans.

The drumline policy was developed in an information vacuum. No shark scientists were consulted to inform the policy and no investigation was conducted into whether the drumlines would prevent shark interactions. And as Premier Barnett was to find out to his cost, the public were not brought into the decision making process. Western Australians do not want dead sharks hooked off their beaches, and

have loudly expressed their opposition, as have people from further afield, around the country and even across the sea.

Premier Barnett took hit after hit in the media. The message was loud and clear: while shark incidents are terrible events, they are not remedied by a primitive and vengeful 'eye for an eye' approach.

But no matter how hard Barnett and his Government were pushed, they refused to budge. Nothing was going to shift their commitment to keeping those hooks in the water.

The Australian Government gave the WA Premier powers to kill great white sharks, which are protected under Federal environmental law.

The drumline policy is more about smoke and mirrors than public safety. It is impossible to reduce the risks of ocean swimming, surfing or diving to zero. The policy is flawed, with 68 sharks killed, none a great white, which is the main 'target' of the program.

Politically, the shark cull has been an extraordinary display of how not to listen to the people who elected you.



Thousands of Australians around the country have voiced their opposition to the WA shark cull.

Weedy Seadragon © John Turnbull

NSW MARINE SANCTUARIES

By Daisy Barham,
New South Wales
Marine Campaigner



Hope on the horizon?

For more than 400 days the New South Wales Government has allowed fishing in 'no-take' marine sanctuaries.

Eastern pomfret © John Turnbull



Endangered grey nurse sharks need sanctuaries free from fishing © John Turnbull

Repeated community surveys show that at least eight out of ten people support marine sanctuaries, yet the government wound back their protection. This goes against public expectations, baseline science and harms the very wildlife that sanctuaries are supposed to protect.

But there is hope. Following the shock resignation of New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell in April, the new Premier Mike Baird has changed the tone of the government's attitude to

marine sanctuaries. Within days of becoming Premier, he told his local paper, "I have a strong view on protecting our marine environment... if there are other areas we need to protect, we should".

These are great comments from a new Premier and are a testament to the thousands of people who have signed postcards, petitions and made phone calls to the NSW government and their local state representatives. A Premier doesn't make comments like this lightly. Premier Baird knows that the majority of people in NSW support marine sanctuaries – and he says that he's one of them.

But words alone won't save the schools of big fish and other marine life in our sanctuaries. Premier Baird must now walk the talk and reverse the decision to allow fishing in sanctuaries. With only 7% of our NSW coastal waters protected in sanctuaries, we cannot afford to lose these areas.

In order for our new Premier to push back on vested interest groups we need to keep the pressure on him. He needs to see us standing up for sanctuaries.

And far from sitting back and hoping the government stands up to vested interest groups and does the right thing, folk across NSW are speaking out to save our marine sanctuaries.

With your help we've joined forces with other conservation organisations and funded a giant billboard in his electorate. Thousands of people every day see our message on marine sanctuaries. You can be certain we're making an impact!

Thank you for your continued support of our marine sanctuaries. We need it now, more than ever.

Queensland Marine National Parks **SAVED**

by Fiona Maxwell,
Marine Campaigner



Just days before a state by-election, Queensland Premier Campbell Newman proposed bringing back fishing in a marine national park (sanctuary zone) at Scotts Point in Moreton Bay Marine Park. The Government also announced they were considering changes to other marine national parks in Queensland.

With 84% of this beautiful marine park already open to various forms of fishing, it would have been a huge step backwards, and a worrying addition to the national trend revoking hard-won conservation gains at sea.

Over the past three months, thousands of AMCS supporters in Queensland contacted their local MP and called on the government to leave our marine national parks alone.

AMCS joined forces with scientists and the dive industry to make sure the Government heard all of our concerns loud and clear.

Dive Queensland President Steve Moon said in a report to the Sunday Mail that it did not make sense that the Government claimed to support tourism, yet its actions attacked the foundation

upon which the industry was built. Marine national parks are a major asset to the Queensland dive and snorkelling industry, which contributes \$1.4 billion to the Queensland economy each year.

The science on the benefits of marine national parks is clear. Research from Australia and overseas consistently shows that areas fully protected from fishing, oil and gas, help protect and recover marine species and habitats while creating more and bigger fish. Marine parks also bring great gains to the economy. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, which generates over \$6 billion in revenue for local communities and the Queensland economy, is testament to the tourism appeal of marine parks.

Thankfully, the Queensland Government recently announced they would not proceed with the proposal at Scotts Point and that there are no plans to change other protected marine areas in Queensland.

It's important to give credit when credit is due, and we commend the Queensland Government for making the right decision and maintaining our marine national parks.

Importantly, with the Australian Government about to launch a review of Australia's offshore marine parks, the decision sends a clear message that the debate over marine national parks has turned a corner.

In the coming months we'll work even harder to protect our national network of marine parks.

Together in only three months we have turned the tide for our Queensland marine national parks!

Sea turtles are swimming for joy to hold on to their sanctuaries in Moreton Bay Marine Park.



Sea GUARDIANS



Graeme Kelleher, AO
has been awarded Honorary
Life Membership to AMCS.

© Troy Mayne, Oceanic Imagery

This year AMCS was delighted to award AMCS Honorary Life Membership to Graeme Kelleher AO, marine protected area expert, and the very first Chair and CEO of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

You were the first CEO of GBRMPA. What sort of challenges did you face back then?

Well, there is no question it was a big job. It explains my somewhat aged appearance!

But seriously, I worked for many different ministers and there was not one federal minister who liked the Queensland Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Joh used to refer to Canberrans as “southern pinky intellectuals”.

Both Joh and Malcolm [Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser] were formidable characters. I was the meat in the sandwich. I had no choice but to be straight with both, including giving them bad news which neither liked.

For example, we wanted to bring most of the Marine Park to the low water mark along the Queensland coastline. Joh was furious and threatened to have a public meeting in every town to oppose establishment of the marine park. We found a way through, pointing out that we were proposing to leave out all the port areas. The newspapers reported that the Premier had prevented the feds from taking over the whole of the low watermark.

But it would have been impossible for us to manage the port areas with the resources we had.

Do you think the challenges faced back then are different to now?

The challenge then was the conflict between unbridled capital development and protection of the environment and that still applies.

There are a lot more people but the same set of users – tourism, fishing, ports, shipping; and the political issues are still the same.

At one point the Environment Minister issued a permit to dump biodegradable rubbish in the Marine Park under the Sea Dumping Act. The Minister expected me to then issue a permit under the Marine Park Act but I refused. That was a horrible time. I was as popular as a pork chop in Jerusalem. The Minister wouldn't speak with me for six weeks which caused me huge stress.

What did you think about GBRMPA approving the dumping permit in January for 5 million tonnes of dredge spoil at Abbot Point?

I had several feelings. Amazement, enormous disappointment and shame

that the reputation of the Authority has now been damaged, for a long time; perhaps permanently. It is not functioning as a proper statutory authority but more as a mere delegate of the minister.

Are you worried about the health of the Great Barrier Reef?

Very worried. We must stop this industrial development, and it will be absolutely disastrous if the Commonwealth hands over environment approval powers to the state.

The Reef is already suffering from major stresses – nitrogen and phosphorous from the mainland, increases in temperature which many coral species can't survive, and acidification of reef waters due to increases in carbon dioxide.

We will have an algal reef not a coral reef if we don't turn things around. When under stress the ability of a coral reef system to survive an additional stress is dramatically reduced.

Supporting AMCS is vital. And I am divesting from the banks that invest in fossil fuels. We should all do that.

Devotion to our OCEANS

As a non-profit charity with minimal government support, AMCS relies almost entirely on the financial support from passionate people across Australia. You put wind in our sails and funds in the kitty to power the campaigns for our precious oceans. Here's a taste of some of the highlights from the high seas this year.

Cakes for SHARKS

What do sharks, the Great Barrier Reef and baking cakes have in common? Ask these wonderful students from Western Australia and New South Wales who baked cakes and other treats to raise money for AMCS campaigns. Tom Easton from NSW wrote:

"On Saturday 6th of April, me and four of my friends, Sam, Liam, Oscar and Vaughan raised \$250 by having a cake stall. We had fun going around our soccer fields asking people if they wanted cakes.

We have donated \$125 to save the sharks and \$125 to save the Barrier Reef. Thank you for helping save marine animals and I hope our donation is enough."



Students at Tom Price Primary School (Pilbara Desert, WA) watched a story on shark culling, and parent Jo Heptinstall, wrote to us to share their reaction:

"After watching the shark cull story students were encouraged to debate the issue, make posters and report on their opinions. Five students were moved and motivated to hold a fundraising bake sale to help 'save the sharks'.

James (year 5), Tariq (year 5), Scott (year 5), Lauren (year 6) and Amanda (year 3) worked together solving the logistics, making posters to advertise the event and man the stall on the day. Twenty students and their families donated goods to the sale and raised \$343 (in twenty minutes!) for the Australian Marine Conservation Society."



We were thrilled and inspired to receive support and much needed funds from these wonderful committed students! Thank you from all of us at AMCS (and the sharks and reef critters too!).

In memory of **VANESSA WYDER**

The staff at AMCS were deeply touched to receive a letter from Leah Cussen who wrote to us to share the story of her best friend Vanessa Wyder. Sadly, Vanessa passed away at only 29 years of age after an eight year battle with Hodgkins Lymphoma.

Leah, together with Vanessa's mother, Helene Ludwig and her father, Sigi Wyder, asked people who loved Vanessa to make a donation to the Australian Marine Conservation Society in her honour. This is what Leah wrote:

"Vanessa travelled around Australia in 2012 in a motor home for one year to raise \$86,000 for The Cancer Council and cancer awareness. During this trip, her love of our oceans grew.

She absolutely loved the Australian coast and got to experience many of our beautiful reefs which she talked about often, Ningaloo being her favourite. She loved the ocean from a very young age and spent as much time as possible at the beach.

She was the most beautiful and amazing woman I have ever known and will be missed deeply by many people. I wanted to share the story of this brave and courageous woman with you."

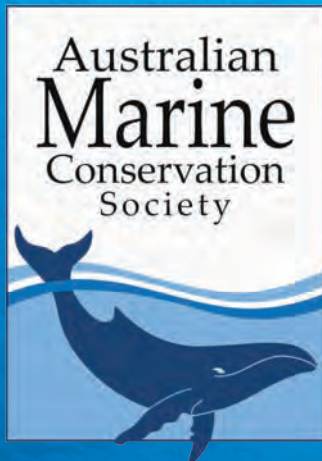
Ningaloo Reef in Western Australia was the subject of an enormous battle defending this fragile fringing coral reef from a mega marina development. As a direct result of our work with AMCS Patron Tim Winton, Ningaloo Reef is now protected in a World Heritage Marine Park, and will be protected for future generations.

AMCS staff were deeply honoured to receive donations in memory of Vanessa Wyder, which raised around \$4000. Thank you Leah, Helene and Sigi.



Vanessa Wyder at Cape Byron © Helene Ludwig





save it

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