

To The Hon Verity Firth
Minister for Climate Change and The Environment
Governor Macquarie Tower
Level 33, 1 Farrer Place,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Add Date

Dear Minister,

Your commitment to the ongoing improvement of marine protection in NSW is encouraging.

However there is clear evidence that our exquisite NSW marine ecosystems are under increasing pressures from overfishing, pollution and climate change. The Grey Nurse Shark is faced with imminent extinction and the Weedy Sea Dragon is in serious decline. Climate change is now recognized by scientists to be the greatest long-term threat to our ocean's vulnerable ecosystems.

It is internationally recognised that a network of 'Marine Protected Areas' is the most effective way to protect our marine environment for future generations and to ensure a sustainable fishing industry for NSW.

Current levels of protection in NSW are woefully inadequate – only 6.5% of the NSW marine environment is protected compared to the minimum of 30% recommended by most marine scientists.

Minister I urge you to fast track the implementation of a long overdue protected area in our waters off Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong – the Hawkesbury Shelf Bioregion – and increase the amount of fully protected areas in key marine environments of NSW. Only through these safe havens will we see our marine ecosystems survive, recover and thrive.

I also urge you to develop a Climate Change Action Plan to implement strategies that will minimize the impacts of climate change on our NSW marine environment.

Its time to Take Action 4 the Ocean!

Yours Sincerely

Add Name & Address