

Questions

MARINE PARKS 24.02.2011

Mr BROCK (Frome) (14:28): Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Can the minister please advise the house whether the displaced effort working group has completed its work and provided the advice on compensation matters to the minister if the proposed marine parks eventuate? Has the minister accepted this advice? If the minister has not accepted this advice, what are the guiding principles that will govern the payment of fair and reasonable compensation to those fishers whose businesses and livelihood are impacted by the creation of marine parks and their zoning? Also, when will these fishers whose businesses and livelihoods will be impacted by the creation of zoning of marine parks be informed of the principles or regulations related to compensation so that they can have some certainty as to their future direction?

In 2008 the government established a joint industry government advisory committee—the displaced effort working group—to advise on the principles of fair and reasonable compensation for commercial fishers whose principles are affected by the establishment or zoning of marine parks. The payment of such fair and reasonable compensation is a requirement of section 21 of the Marine Parks Act 2007.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (14:30): Madam Speaker, if I do miss anything in responding I am sure that the member will be on his feet quickly to say that I did not answer this part of it.

I think it is important to put all this in context. The government and the commercial fishing industry continue to work together on what is a very important issue that has been raised by the member for Frome. I acknowledge his outstanding representation of the people of the electorate of Frome. It is an extremely important issue, that of displaced commercial fishing, which may result from the zoning of the South Australian marine parks.

What I would also say, too, is that in reality we say that we do not want to pay compensation, and that is true. A 5 per cent maximum was agreed to from the EconSearch report. However, quite frankly, through the input of the commercial fishers, we want to undertake a process that minimises any displaced effort whatsoever.

The same applies, I might add, to recreational fishers. I have said ad nauseam that we are not about compromising in any way what is a very vibrant and robust industry here in South Australia, the commercial fishing sector. In fact, I was on the West Coast last week, as I mentioned, and saw the input into those communities of recreational fishers who travel to those regions to enjoy not only its beauty but also to catch a feed of fish.

The government is committed to ensuring that marine parks will provide comprehensive, adequate and representative protection for South Australia's marine environment, and, importantly, whilst also ensuring, as I mentioned, minimal impact on the displacement of our state's valuable seafood industry and, in turn, recreational fishers.

To achieve this the government has made a firm commitment that the marine parks will have no more than 5 per cent economic impact on the state's fishing industry—and that is as measured by the 2007 EconSearch report—by ensuring that wherever possible sanctuary zones have minimal overlap with working areas.

There has been the establishment of a displaced effort working group. It has completed its work, and, as a result, there is considerable common ground between the commercial fishing industry and government on the process for managing displaced commercial fishing effort. I just want to make this point, too, in response to the member for Frome: I have advised industry that the agreed sequential steps for managing displaced effort that are expected to be implemented are, one, avoid displacement by pragmatic zoning, which makes a lot of

sense, and, two, redistribute effort only where possible without impacting ecological and economic sustainability to the fishery. That is, if we draw a zone—I will explain that for the—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. P. CAICA: Yes, it's obvious isn't it

Mr PENGILLY (Finniss) (14:42): I have a supplementary question. What compensation will be paid to associated industries such as tourism, hospitality, retail outlets, fishing shops—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr PENGILLY: —if this madness goes ahead at the moment?

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Point of order, Madam Speaker: the deputy leader, having been such a stickler for argument, I think referring to something as madness is pointedly argument and the question should be ruled out of order.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Standing order 97, from memory, says that there should not be argument in a question.

Mr BROCK: Supplementary, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Just a minute, member for Frome. I do uphold the point of order about argument in the question. Minister, do you want to respond to that question or not?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (14:42): All I would say, Madam Speaker, is that the only madness that abounds is that madness being promoted by the opposition with respect to marine parks. It was a ridiculous question.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Frome, your supplementary needs to be very much related to the question.

Mr BROCK (Frome) (14:43): Thank you, Madam Speaker. The minister has indicated that the displaced effort working group has finished its work. All those minutes, and so on, minister, will they be made public on the website?

The Hon. P. CAICA (Colton—Minister for Environment and Conservation, Minister for the River Murray, Minister for Water) (14:44): I thank the honourable member again for his very thoughtful question. What we want to do is be completely transparent about this. The marine alliance has asked for more clarification on detail with respect to those sequential principles. Certainly, if we want these parks to be co-produced—if we want the input of commercial and recreational fishers and others—we will make that information available.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that we are 35 or 36 minutes into question time and the opposition has had two questions. The Leader of the Opposition.