SOME INSPIRATION.

The GBRMNP is 344,000km2 with over 30% (103,000km2) is already “Green zoned” and protected from all forms of fishing. The 2000km of Coastline is sparsely populated and many areas are very remote and receive next to no fishing pressure what so ever. Due to Seasonal trade winds and cyclones the Northern Qld coast is unfishable due to rough seas for the majority of the year. Spanish Mackerel are fast growing and prolific breeders, breeding before the bag limit size of 2 years and 75cm. All the above-mentioned factors and common sense tend to this new “Biomass Estimate Model” being very wrong.

QLD Fisheries have set the Quotas and bag limits for many years now and have always had the stocks monitored and been labeled as Healthy. Almost overnight the stock has been labelled “Critical” once the new “Working Group” was established and conducted surveys and employed a “New Biomass Estimate Model”. How can this be so if Fisheries QLD have been managing the fishery so well for so long. Have they Got it wrong for so long? If so they should be held accountable.

Recreational and Professional fishers have abided by set Quotas and Bag Limits for many years now. The Professional Quota of 600Ton has been half filled and fished at around 300 Ton annually. This is not due to stock levels but market demand. The recreational sector is estimated to catch 170Ton Annually. Combing the two totals it is still below the Professional Quota of 600Ton set by Qld Fisheries. How can this lead to a stock level crash?

Spanish Mackerel are one of the highest Omega 3 fish. They are a healthy staple fish for people to eat. They freeze well and once filleted, gutted and portioned an average 10kg fish leads to 8.5kg of yield (85%) of product. They are easily made boneless and safe for children to eat. They are a domestic market fish and supplied to the whole QLD coast for fish and chip takeaways and Cafes. As an Australian living on the worlds largest Island I demand access to Australian fish products, and refuse to buy Imported or Farmed fish products.

As a Recreational fisher I have been catching Spanish Mackerel for years. They are a Family favorite. Fishing is a favorite past time. I have always been able to easily catch my limits and feel this new working group is just another attack on my rights as an Australian to feed my family. For many years I have accumulated many rods and reels and countless lures bought and snipped off by Spanish Mackerel. A closure to this species will see millions of dollars in lost revenue to Australian tackle stores, lure makers, bait suppliers, charter operators, tourism and especially small business fish and chip stores.