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30th September 2005

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Mike Ball Dive Expeditions Operate Liveaboard Dive vessels in the Central, Cairns and Far Northern sections and are also members of the Cod Hole and Ribbon Reef Operators Association (CHARROA). We have been actively engaging with GBRMPA over the mooring application process as well as the recent rezoning. We support the government's recent recognition of the commercial advantage to saving the tourism assets. Animals such as Potato Cod or a Shark at Osprey Reef is worth over a million dollars alive to our tourism business versus \$ 10.00 a kilo dead and non renewable. We strongly support the recent changes in the zoning of the Great Barrier Reef. To ensure the long term future for this and further wise management decisions, we urge the government to maintain the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as a strong, independent statutory authority with full decision making powers and hopefully with more powers to deal with the real increasing threats to the health of the GBR.

The Governments recent decisions reflect great recognition of tourism as a sustainable industry within the GBRMP and the need for major and diverse no-take areas to protect this important economic and environmental resource. The increase from 4.5% to 33% no-take areas is wonderful but is by no means the final hard decision which will need to be made to ensure sustainability and protection for the GBRMP. Any reduction in this protection level or of management efficiency of the GBRMPA will certainly have adverse effects on both the environment and the burgeoning economic and employment benefits of tourism to Australia.

Mike Ball Dive Expeditions will continue to work with management agencies to ensure sustainability of the GBRMP and Coral Sea areas. Examples of this are the Dwarf Minke Whale Code of Practice and the evolving Memorandum of Understanding for protection of the northern Coral Sea reefs between CHARROA and the Coral Sea Fishery Group.

Mike Ball Dive Expeditions believe:

- The GBRMP Authority should retain its independent board and provide recommendations directly to the Minister for Environment and Heritage.
- The future health of the Great Barrier Reef depends on ensuring that GBRMPA has the power to control all damaging activities that affect the reef.
- Continue to have close dialogue and create innovative partnerships with the different stake holders like tourism.
- The planning and management of the GBR Marine Park and GBR World Heritage Area as a whole under the GBRMP Act, regulations, zoning plans and plans of management be maintained but emphasis continues to be made by the GBRMP Authority of the need for integrated catchment planning and management in the coastal areas adjacent to the GBR.
- Extend the eastern boundary of the GBRMP to include the Coral Sea reefs and surrounding waters. Major reef systems include: Osprey Reef, the already highly protected Lihou Reef (an existing National Nature Reserve), Marion Reef, Flinders Reef, the Willis Group, Coringa Islands and the Saumarez Reefs. The extended Park should include a comprehensive network of no-take zones to ensure the protection of the Coral Sea reefs.

- In development of legislation under the GBRMP Act to regulate land-sourced marine pollution from existing and new development within the GBR catchment, including such issues as:
 - Transforming farming practices that contribute to sediment, nutrient and other pollutant loads;
 - Ensuring all aquaculture is sustainable and has no net impact on water quality or ecosystem health
 - Reducing the impact of discharges of industrial waste and sewage effluent; and
 - Managing stormwater
 - Seafloor prawning trawling is an inappropriate activity within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and a commitment is made to its eventual phase-out.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Stephen
Operations Manager
Mike Ball Dive Expeditions