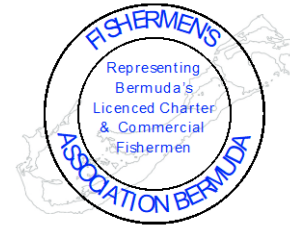


Fishermen's Association of Bermuda

July 19, 2023

Hon. E. David Burt, JP, MP, Premier  
Hon. Walter H. Roban, JP, MP, Minister of Home Affairs



Good day sirs,

After careful consideration and deliberation, the Members of the Fishermen's Association of Bermuda have declined to ratify the proposed MOU between FAB and the Bermuda Government as proposed.

The FAB Members consider the primary goal of the Bermuda Ocean Prosperity Program, which is to designate 20% of Bermuda's waters as fully protected, or no-take, to be counter to their philosophy of Marine Stewardship. FAB sees the value of geographic fishing closures when fishing presents a direct threat, as shown with clear and quantitative evidence, to a particular species or habitat, but otherwise opposes all geographic based closures to fishing.

It has been made clear, both in BOPP focus groups and in the Executives' discussions with DENR staff and yourself, that there is not enough room for consideration of FAB's position given the structure of the BOPP steering committee, even with the inclusion of a FAB representative and the support of a Fisheries Management sub-committee. The commitment shown to the goal of 20% full no-take protection implies a willingness to forego consideration of evidence based decision making, socio-economic and cultural impact, and the long neglect of issues of importance to the fishing industry, all in favor of pandering to a green-washed model that neglects real solutions to difficult problems in Bermuda's marine environment.

The closure of areas to fishing for vague, general protection, rather than targeted management, sets a precedence that is unacceptable to the commercial fishing industry and destroys any remaining elements of trust and cooperation between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and fishers. The Members of FAB implore this government to step back from this precipice, consider the possibilities of approaching fishers as partners, and reconsider this ill-advised commitment, which was decided with no public consultation whatsoever. Until the public announcement that this goal of 20% no-take protection is amended, FAB will continue to develop their own plan for sustainable fisheries management, and will be engaging with the public and community partners in their effort.

Thanks and kind regards,

*Allan Bean*

Allan Bean  
President  
Fishermen's Association of Bermuda