Minister Burke should look closely at a new United Nations report that highlights Australia’s management of the Great Barrier Reef as a shining example of successful resource regulation. It beggars belief why the Federal Government is pushing to exclude all trawling in the Coral Sea when we have this UN report applauding the management of the Great Barrier Reef which permits trawling, Senator Boswell said.

The report, Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing addresses global sustainability and contains 56 recommendations to put sustainable development in practice.

It is recommendation 19 that Burke should really take note of as this is where the report addresses fisheries management and cites the Great Barrier Reef as the great success story in sustainable management.

The report states “sustainably managing the Great Barrier Reef requires balancing human use with the maintenance of the area’s natural and cultural integrity.”

If the management of the Great Barrier Reef is such a great success story why is the Government not following this world best practice in the Coral Sea.

Minister Burke has capitulated to the Green Groups and the environmental lobby group PEW and has delivered them the world’s largest Marine Park.

It was confirmed in Senate Estimates on 29 October 2009 by Senator Wong that the Coral Sea Marine Park was on PEW’s agenda and now the Gillard Government has delivered it to them on a silver platter.

PEW and the Green Groups have demonised trawling for years and with trawling prohibited in the Coral Sea commercial fishermen and around 40 trawler operators will be directly affected by the reserve proposal. The total lock up of the Coral Sea is a bridge too far especially when there is no scientific basis for the proposal. The area is in pristine condition and has been for 200 years.

Before Burke cuts off a food source and destroys hundreds of Australians livelihoods and the communities that depend on the fishing industry he needs to go back to the drawing board and look to the Great Barrier Reef for inspiration not PEW.

ENDS