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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

9 November 2021

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Labor has lost its radar on good policy

Labor has again shown that it is willing to play politics on any issue, regardless of the consequences.

Today's vote in the Legislative Council in favour of overturning rules designed to support the sustainable management of the abalone industry is the kind of reckless decision by Labor – at odds with the best available science – and, what we've come to expect.

These new rules have been in place for two years. They are working and they are based on sound, evidence-based science.

The Government did not take the decision to put these new rules in place lightly. It followed extensive consultation with stakeholders, meeting and exceeding all statutory requirements.

Decisions put in place for current and future fishers will always be complex and involve different interests. What is important is to balance these interests and trust the science to secure the fishery. Our rules still allowed for a fair and reasonable recreational take of abalone.

What Labor has done is at odds with the science and puts at risk the particularly vulnerable populations of abalone on the East Coast.

With the latest science showing these populations remain under threat, Labor has been willing to bet short-term interests against a real risk that there may ultimately be inadequate stocks in the years ahead.

Recreational fishers have not been the only group impacted. The commercial fishery total allowable catch, which is reviewed on an annual basis, has seen a 95 per cent decrease in the East Coast zone since 1984, with zero or small commercial catch caps in some zones.

Parliament has a role and responsibility to protect common fishing resources for all, and Labor has shown they cannot be trusted to do this.