

Tuna off Australia threatened species list

Australian Environment Minister Ian Campbell has reportedly decided to remove the southern bluefin tuna from his nation's threatened species list.

Campbell made the decision despite a recommendation to the contrary from the federal government's scientific committee, the Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported Tuesday.

Only about 3 percent of the tuna stocks that existed in 1960 remain, but Campbell said continuing to list the fish as threatened would be detrimental to its survival.

Opponents, including the Democrats' environment spokesman, Sen. Andrew Bartlett, says that is bizarre.

"To just say that it will be detrimental to the survival of the species listed, I think is extraordinary and is a contempt of the law as it stands," he said, noting the economic benefits of Australia's fishing industry are being given more importance than environmental impact.

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