



NSW Marine Estate
Community Wellbeing Survey Report

Connections to Sea Country –
Aboriginal People of Coastal NSW
Summary Report (Wave 1)



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Regional New South Wales acknowledges that it stands on Country which always was and always will be Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work.

Cover image: © Bindarray Maagun (River Feast) by Gumbaynggirr artist Lavinnia Inglis

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Introduction

This report is a summary of the findings from the Connections to Sea Country survey of Aboriginal people along coastal NSW.

The survey aimed to improve our understanding of Aboriginal people's cultural connections to Sea Country and the impacts on these connections.



Image: "Connection to Sea Country". Location: Maclean.

The full survey report Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1) was prepared by NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and Ipsos Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Unit (ATSIRU). The full report includes further details of the results by Sea Country area and age. It is available from www.marine.nsw.gov.au.

The need for the survey

Aboriginal peoples of the east coast of NSW are the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land, waters and sea. Listening to Aboriginal people's concerns and suggestions about Sea Country will help us manage the NSW marine estate.

Historically, there has been no systematic monitoring of the social, cultural and economic (or human) attributes of the NSW marine estate. Such monitoring is essential to realising the vision of the Marine Estate Management Strategy (and associated Marine Integrated Monitoring Program). The survey allows us to monitor one aspect of the social, cultural and economic attributes of the NSW marine estate. We need to understand these attributes to address the priority threats and risks facing the NSW marine estate.

The statewide Threat and Risk Assessment (statewide TARA) identified many threats to Aboriginal cultural heritage values and was considered to be a moderate or high risk across the state for all priority threats. Physical threats to the environment, such as pollution, loss of habitat or depletion of stocks threaten Aboriginal culture because the lives and spirituality of Aboriginal people are directly related to Country. The lack of Aboriginal involvement in decision-making has also been identified as a major threat to culture. Other threats relate to resource use conflict, governance of the marine estate and lack of access.

For Aboriginal people, culture, nature, land and water are inseparable: healthy Country means healthy people. Where these links to Country are threatened, due to environmental degradation, restricted access, or competition between user groups, it can result in a loss of culture.

Over many years, Aboriginal people have advocated for the protection of their cultures against threats, such as overdevelopment, lack of access and pollution. This survey provides an opportunity to monitor these threats over time to see what progress we are making to address them.

The NSW marine estate and Sea Country

The NSW marine estate includes the state's coastal waters out to 3 nautical miles. It includes estuaries, coastal lakes and lagoons, coastal wetlands and adjacent coastal lands influenced by oceanic processes, including beaches, dunes, headlands and rock platforms. These areas are also recognised as Sea Country. The NSW community derives social, cultural, and economic benefits from the marine estate, underpinned by good water quality, healthy habitats and diverse and abundant marine life.



Image: Cultural sites (middens) “threatened by Climate Change”. Location: Tuross River.

The NSW Government established a vision for the NSW coast in 2018. This vision is for:

“a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and into the future.”

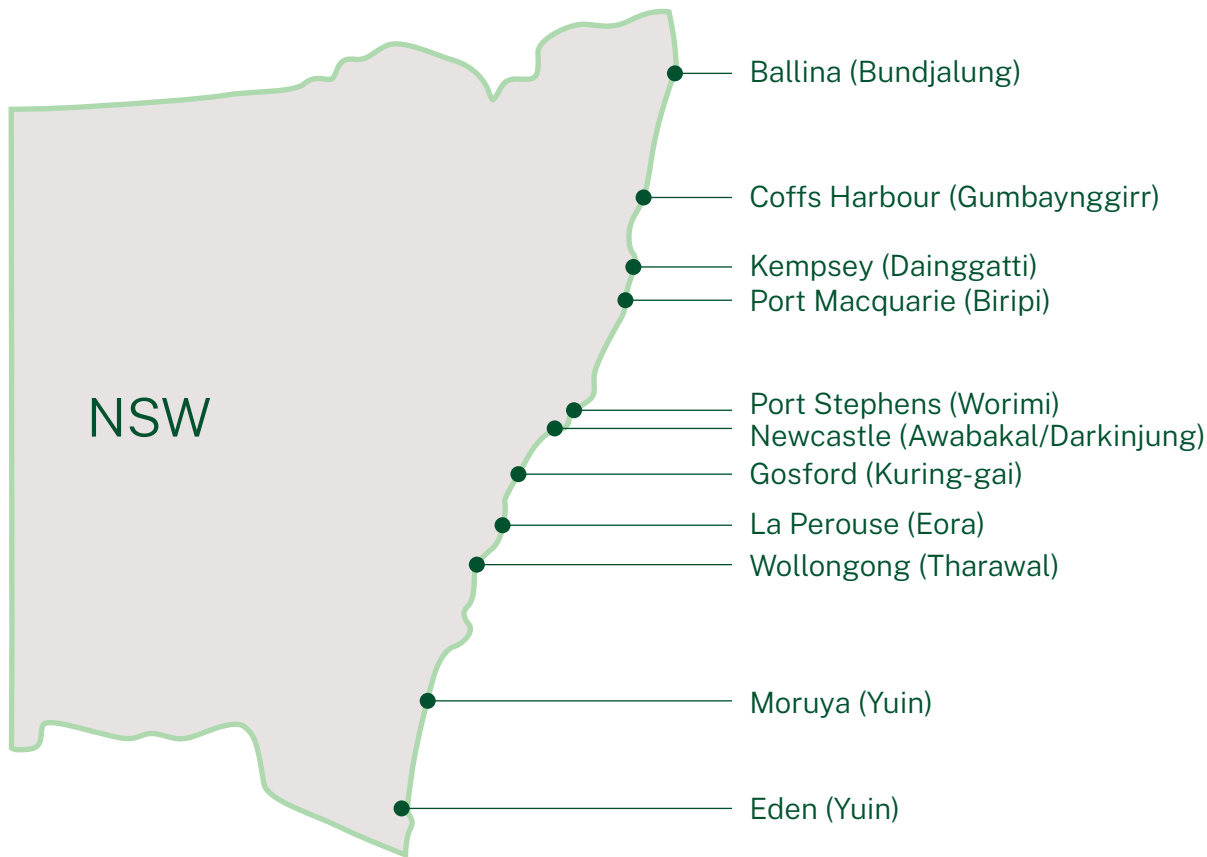
The Marine Estate Management Strategy outlines the vision and priorities for managing the marine estate. We are monitoring our progress towards this vision through the Marine Integrated Monitoring Program, which aims to:

- a) monitor the condition and trend of environmental assets and community benefits
- b) evaluate the effectiveness of management initiatives and actions that aim to reduce priority threats and risks
- c) fill knowledge gaps that were identified as part of the statewide TARA.

This report is a critical step in achieving these purposes and is a key deliverable for initiative 8 under the Marine Estate Management Strategy – to improve the social, cultural and economic benefits that the community derives from the marine estate.

Survey Approach

The survey asked for the views of Aboriginal people from 11 locations that aligned with the following Aboriginal Nations along the NSW coast:



Survey design

A 40-minute face-to-face survey was the most suitable approach for this research because it is:

- ‘future proof’ as it lets us collect robust and comparable data in future waves
- inclusive of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The survey was co-developed by NSW DPI, Ipsos ATSIIRU, and Ipsos Public Affairs. Ethical approval was given by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS).

The survey design followed the guidelines for ethical research in Australian Indigenous studies (GERAIS) so that it:

- empowered Aboriginal communities to be fully involved from the start and making their own choices
- ensured that the Sea Country survey was supported by Aboriginal communities and conducted ethically.

This approach provides Aboriginal communities involved in the research with assurance that their rights, culture and heritage are respected, that they understand the aims and methods of the research, and that they will share in the results of this work.

Ipsos ATSIIRU employed, trained, mentored and supported 22 local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander researchers to promote and conduct the Sea Country survey. Recruitment of Aboriginal people for the face-to-face survey was conducted in person by the local researchers in the communities. As part of the ethics guidelines, community consent to do the research (via community letters of support) was received in each location.



A total of 562 responses were recorded for Aboriginal people across coastal NSW. These responses should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Quotas for location, age and gender were used to ensure the sample was not skewed towards a particular place or characteristic. All respondents were over the age of 18 at the time of the survey.

The design of the survey allows for long-term monitoring by repeating the survey periodically. The questions and responses have been specifically designed to accurately reflect community experiences over the past 12 months and allow for tracking of priority indicators of Aboriginal people's cultural connections to Sea Country and impacts to these connections.

Specifically, this research was designed to:

- **develop a methodology to collect long-term data for Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW that allows for robust analysis of spatial and temporal trends in community wellbeing**
- **collect baseline data for Aboriginal peoples on impacts to their cultural connection to compare with future survey waves**
- **collect baseline data against a suite of relevant outcome indicators identified in the NSW Marine Estate Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**
- **fill key cultural knowledge gaps identified in the statewide TARA.**

Key themes

Content for the survey was drafted by DPI and was based on previous work conducted under the Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA), including published reviews of benefits and threats to Aboriginal peoples' connections with Sea Country in NSW, and specific concerns raised by Aboriginal community representatives at engagement workshops for the NSW Threat and Risk Assessment.¹²³⁴ Survey content was finalised through review and discussion with the Marine Estate Management Strategy cultural working group and MEMA staff with relevant cultural expertise.

The key themes that emerged from the above research were:

- **Interactions with Sea Country**
- **Importance of Sea Country for quality of life**
- **Cultural connections to Sea Country**
- **Caring for Sea Country**
- **Community perceptions of environmental health**
- **Impact of key threats to cultural connections with Sea Country**
- **Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management**
- **Employment related to Sea Country**
- **Involvement and interest in government-led Sea Country programs**



Image: Worimi Elders naming the new Port Stephens reefs Bindayimaguba Ninang and Garuwaguba Ninang, celebrated with a traditional smoking ceremony on site – Photo courtesy of Salty Dingo Location: Port Stephens.

¹ Sea countries of New South Wales: a benefits and threats analysis of Aboriginal people's connections with the marine estate (PDF, 13035.55 KB) (Feary, 2015)

² Peer review of 'Sea countries of New South Wales: a benefits and threats analysis of Aboriginal people's connections with the marine estate' (PDF, 242.54 KB) (Schnierer, 2015)

³ NSW Marine Estate Threat and Risk Assessment Final Report (PDF, 5144.96 KB) (BMT WBM, 2017)

⁴ Draft statewide threat and risk assessment – Aboriginal workshop report (PDF, 1790.26 KB) (Origin Communications Australia, 2017)

Survey Results

Aboriginal peoples reported the importance of Sea Country for cultural connections, health and wellbeing. It is clear from the survey that Sea Country is uniquely significant to Aboriginal people.

The scorecard below summarises the priority indicators and average scores given by survey respondents to the survey questions.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score
Community use of the NSW marine estate	
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:	
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions	
• Cultural celebrations	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life	
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.3/10
Top 3 contributors to Aboriginal peoples quality of life:	
• Source of food/provides for my family and community	22% of people
• Cultural connection/part of cultural heritage/important to our culture	16% of people
• Contributes to my mental and emotional health	16% of people
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²	
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.1/10

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

Caring for Sea Country

How much do you agree with the following statements?³

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions | 9.2/10 |
| • I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country | 8.8/10 |

Community perceptions of environmental health

How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	76% 'at least moderately concerned'
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%
--------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------

Top reasons for positive rating of current health of Sea Country

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| • Clean/no rubbish/pristine waterways/tidy beaches | 20% of people |
| • Seafood is abundant and healthy/can catch a feed | 14% of people |
| • Maintained/looked after/cared for by community/caring for Country is part of culture | 13% of people |

Top reasons for negative rating of current health of Sea Country

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| • Pollution | 28% of people |
| • Less food/overfishing/taking too much/impacts on wildlife | 27% of people |
| • Rubbish/litter everywhere/untidy beaches/dirty | 22% of people |

Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country

How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area?⁴

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks | 8.2/10 |
| • Loss of natural habitats | 8.0/10 |
| • Illegal activities | 8.0/10 |
| • Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management | 8.0/10 |
| • Climate change | 7.9/10 |
| • Overcrowding | 7.9/10 |
| • Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat | 7.8/10 |
| • Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions | 7.8/10 |
| • Poor water quality | 7.7/10 |
| • Seafood contamination | 7.5/10 |
| • Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife | 7.4/10 |

³ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

⁴ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management

Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with:⁵

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations | 4.3/10 |
| • Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations | 4.0/10 |
| • Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions | 3.9/10 |
| • Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights | 3.7/10 |

Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with:⁶

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say | 3.7/10 |
| • Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find | 3.5/10 |
| • Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand | 3.5/10 |
| • Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand | 3.4/10 |
| • Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find | 3.3/10 |

Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?

Yes -11%
of people
No -75%
of people

Thinking about when you have been consulted by government to talk about management of Sea Country, how satisfied are you with:⁷

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • People with cultural authority are being consulted | 3.1/10 |
| • Traditional Owners are actively involved in government decision making | 2.7/10 |
| • Cultural knowledge is used in decision-making | 2.6/10 |
| • Aboriginal cultures are understood by government staff who engage with your community | 2.4/10 |
| • Rights as Traditional Owners are adequately recognised in current management | 2.3/10 |
| • Government have acted on issues raised by your community | 2.2/10 |

How much do you agree with the following statements:⁸

There are opportunities for:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| • employment or business ownership related to Sea Country | 4.0/10 |
| • training & education on Sea Country | 4.0/10 |
| • joint management of Sea Country | 3.8/10 |
| • Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country | 3.7/10 |
| • developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests | 3.7/10 |

Current employment in work related to Sea Country

Do you currently receive income from work that relates to Sea Country?

Yes -5%
of people
No -87%
of people

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁷ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁸ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Interactions with Sea Country

Just under half (48%) of Aboriginal people visited their local Sea Country at least once a week for cultural activities or maintaining traditions. Interactions were measured as:

- the frequency of visits
- the types of cultural activities people took part in.

Frequency of visitation to Sea Country for cultural reasons

Aboriginal people reported that they frequently participate in cultural activities or traditions in their local area. During the past 12 months, around half (48%) visited their local coastal area at least once a week, while around one in 3 (31%) visited their local coastal area daily.

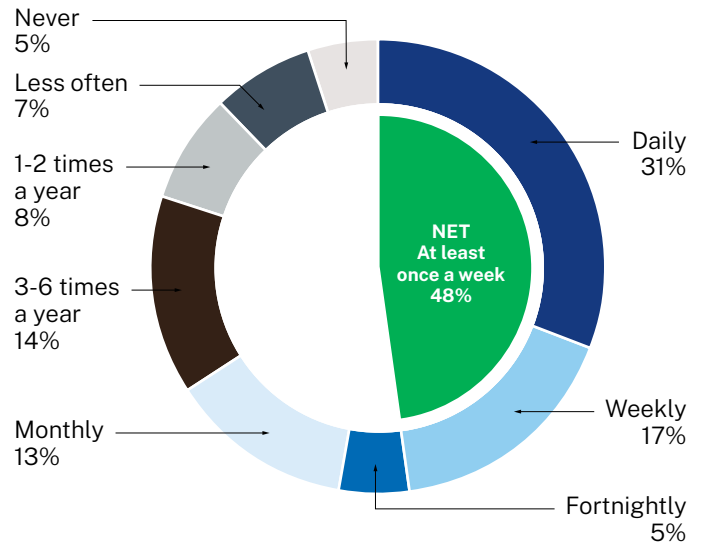


Figure 1: Frequency of visitation to Sea Country at a Statewide level.

Participation in Sea Country cultural activities and traditions

Aboriginal people reported engaging in a diverse range of cultural activities and traditions on Sea Country. The most common cultural activities include:



Recreation (e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating)

75%



Hook and line fishing

61%



Camping/staying and being on Sea Country

57%



Caring for Sea Country

45%

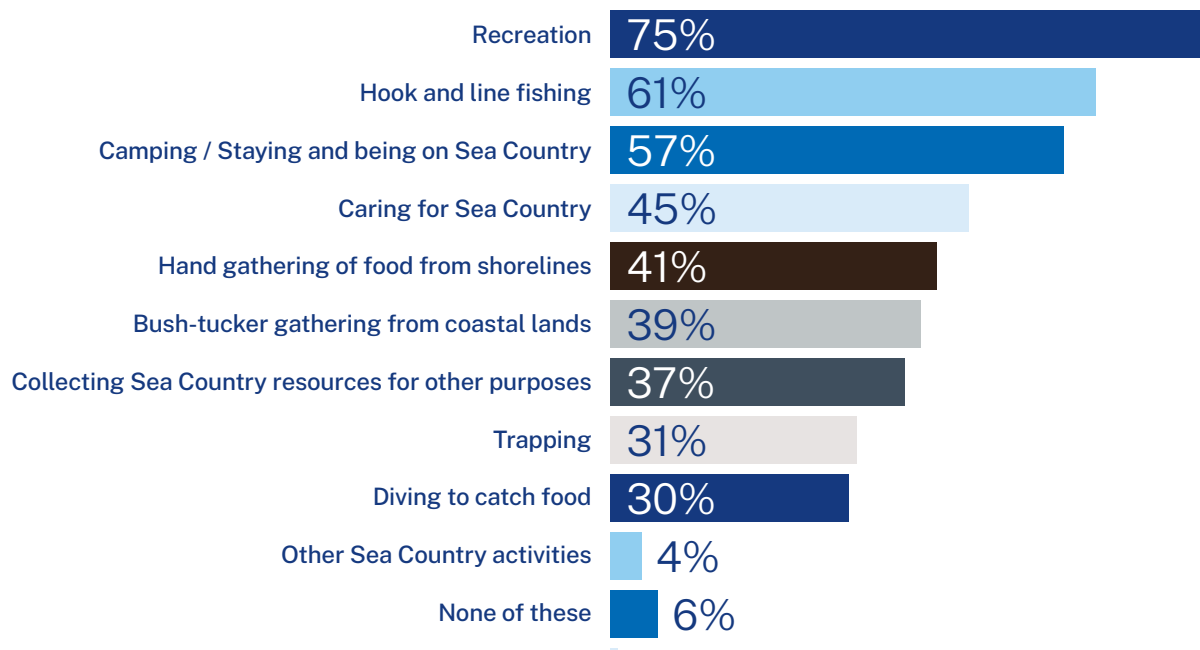


Figure 2: Cultural activities undertaken on Sea Country in the past 12 months.

Aboriginal people also participated in a range of other cultural activities and traditions on Sea Country. Nine in 10 (91%) of Aboriginal people had participated in at least one cultural activity or tradition on Sea Country. The 3 most common cultural activities were:

Cultural celebrations

69%

Sorry business or funerals

56%

Having passed on or received cultural knowledge such as use of plants, animals, stories, responsibilities to care for Sea Country

45%

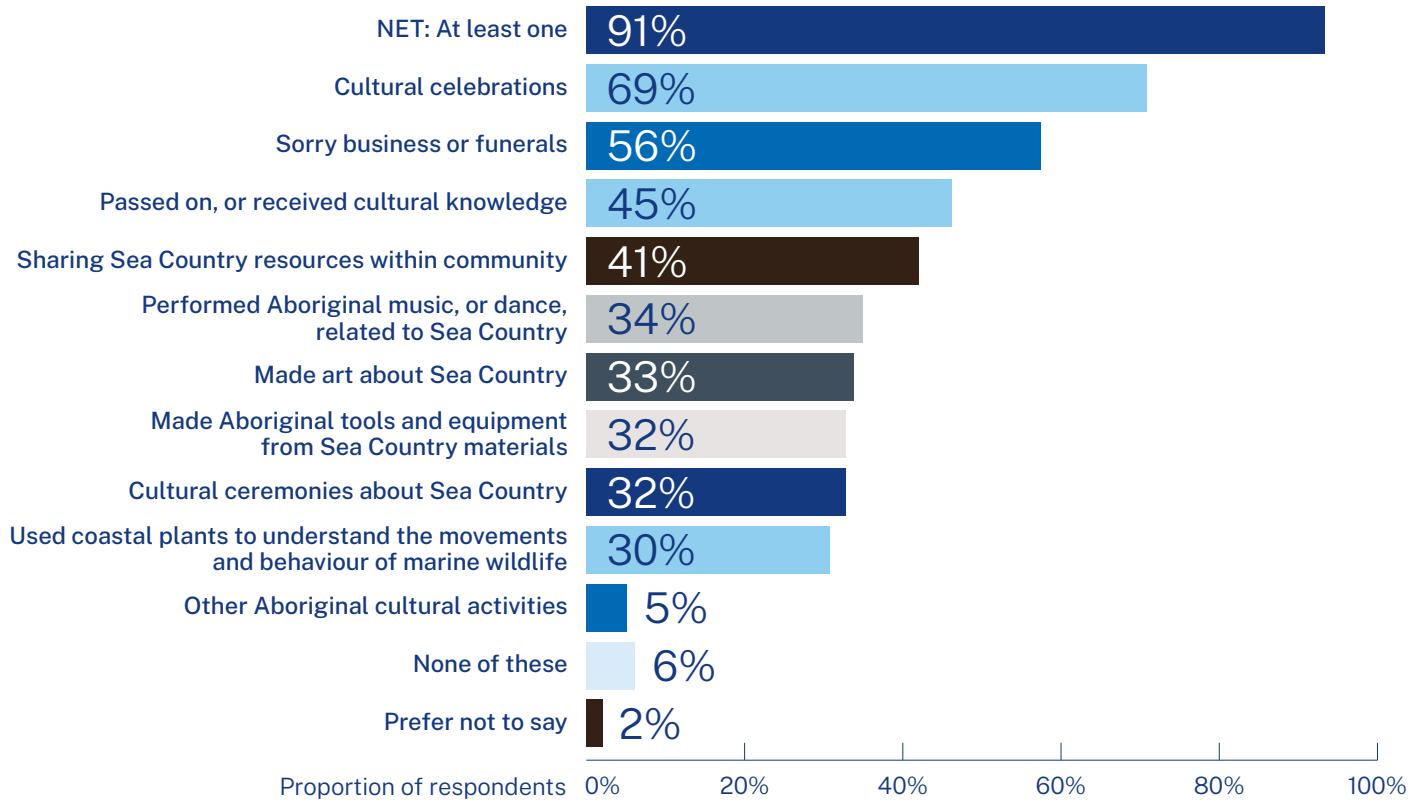


Figure 3: Cultural activities and traditions undertaken on Sea Country in the past 12 months.



Image: Teaching traditional weaving to school kids. Location: Long Swamp – Bermagui.

Importance of Sea Country to quality of life

Given the high degree of cultural connection to the coast, it is unsurprising that participants rated Sea Country as an extremely important factor in contributing to their quality of life and the social, cultural and spiritual aspects of Aboriginal peoples' lives.

Contribution to the quality of life of Aboriginal people

The importance of Sea Country in contributing to the quality of life was high (9.3 out of 10) – nearly 4 in 5 respondents (79%) indicated that it is 'very important' in contributing to their quality of life (close to the maximum score of 10).

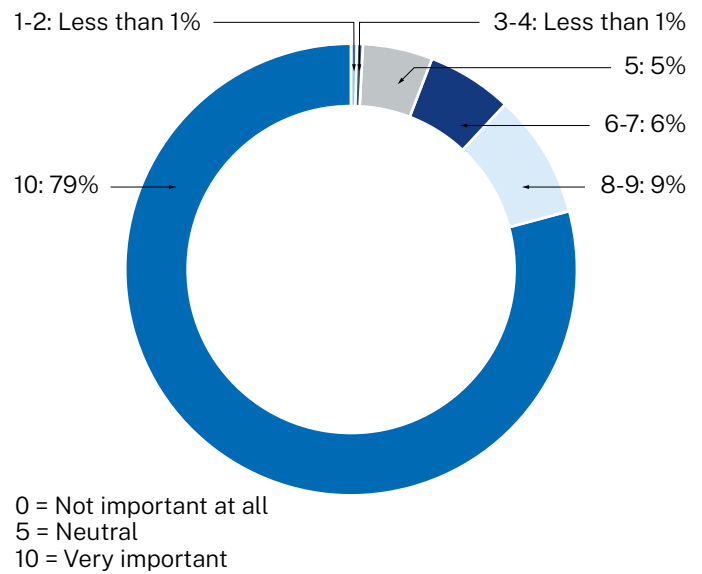


Figure 4: Contribution of Sea Country to quality of life.

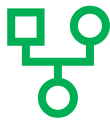
“My connection to Sea Country contributes to my health and wellbeing, it’s my medicine and keeps me connected to my culture.”

The 3 most common explanations for this positive view were found to be:



Source of food/provides for my family and community

22%



Cultural connection/part of cultural heritage/important to our culture

16%



Contributes to my mental and emotional health

16%



“To be out on Country is very important to my quality of life. I have grown up on Sea Country my whole life, it is a part of who I am, it helps my health, mental health and wellbeing, to stay culturally connected to mother earth and passing on knowledge to my kids through being able to take them out on Country. Showing and sharing stories and teaching them culture is uplifting.”

Children’s community Cultural fishing day. Location: Port Macquarie.

Contributions to personal health and wellbeing

The importance of connection to Sea Country is further emphasised by the level of contribution it makes to the social, cultural and spiritual aspects of Aboriginal peoples' lives. Sea Country's contribution to spending time and socialising with family and community, cultural identity and emotional and mental health were rated as the most important aspects.

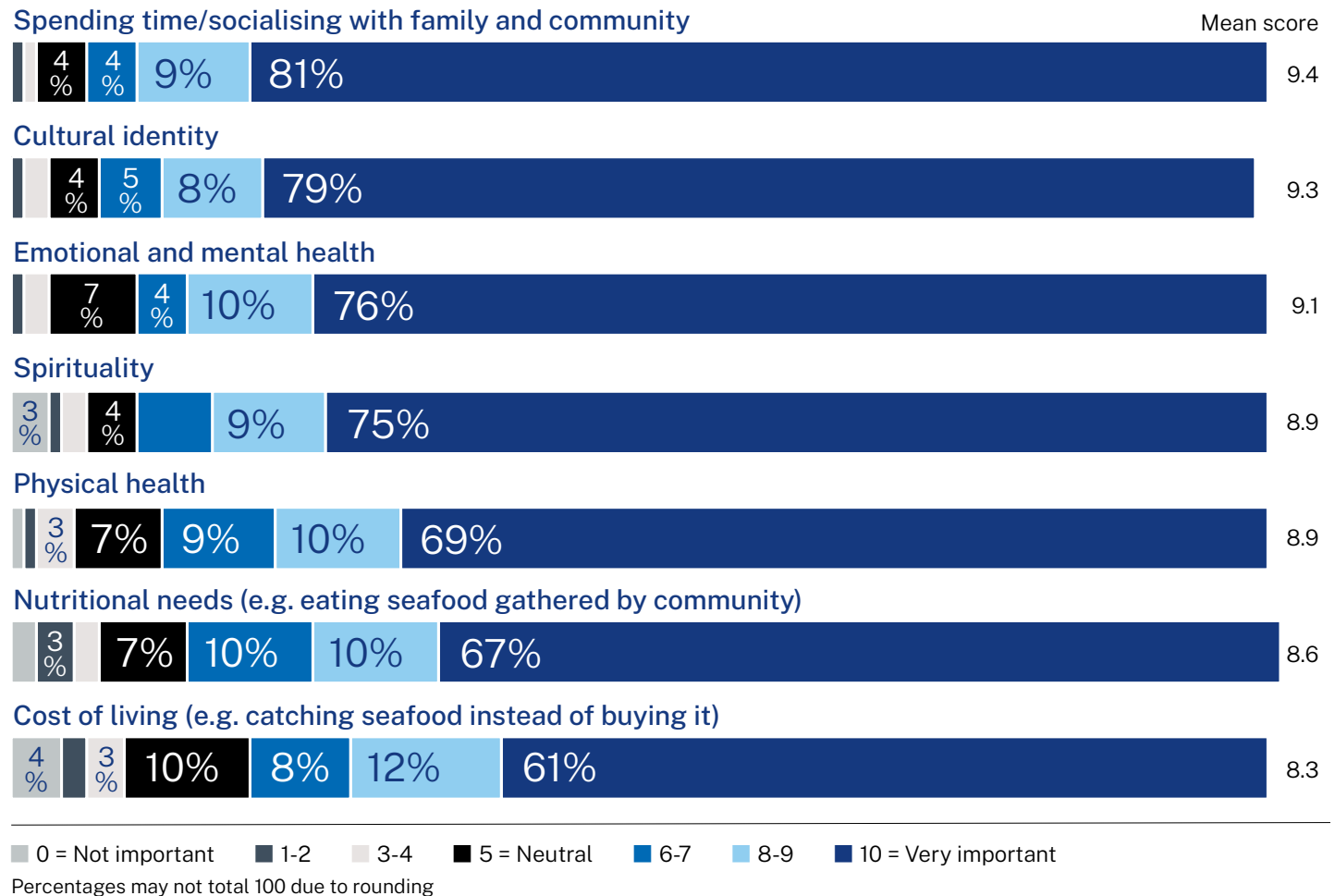


Figure 5: Contribution of Sea Country to personal health and wellbeing.



“Importance of Sea Country for quality of life” food resources –cultural fishing. Location: La Perouse - Botany Bay.

Cultural connections to Sea Country

Aboriginal people reported specific cultural connections and relationships with a wide diversity of Sea Country fish and animals. This included:

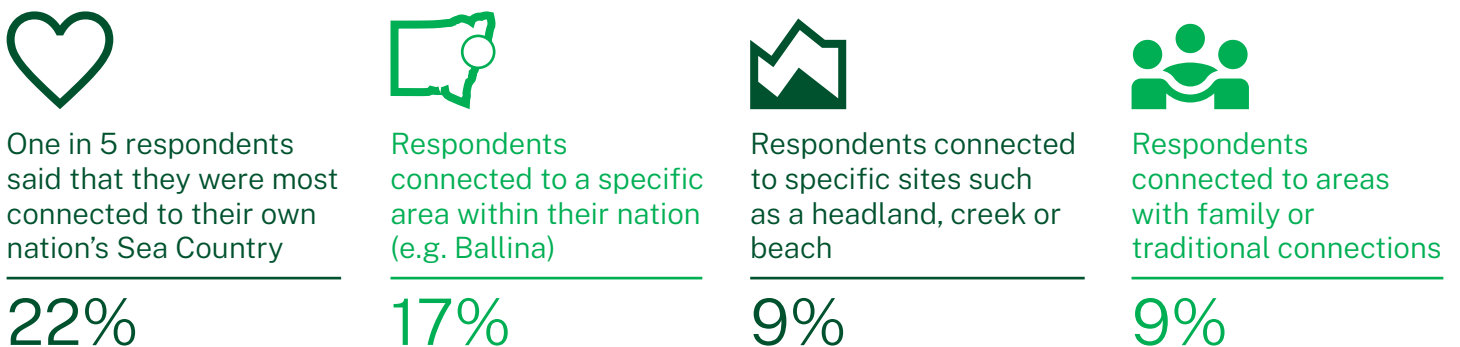


Others articulated a connection to all Sea Country wildlife and/or those that inhabit a particular area of Country.

“I have a strong connection culturally to the land and sea. My family have lived off the sea for generations, fishing, diving, collecting bush foods and medicines. My lore totem is the salmon, so I have a strong connection to that sea animal which I have to protect and honour.”

Cultural connections with areas of Sea Country

Connections or relationships with particular places on Sea Country were also diverse.



6%

One in 20 indicated a connection to all Sea Country.

“My family, my ancestors have lived in Lapa/Yarra Bay all my life and generations before me. The beach and ocean is my spiritual home, and always will be. I hold my local beach close to my heart as do my kids.”

Perceived appreciation of Sea Country's cultural importance by non-Aboriginal people

When asked to rate whether they agree that non-Aboriginal people appreciate Sea Country's importance to Aboriginal cultures, Aboriginal people disagreed with this statement, with a mean score of 4.4 on a scale from 0 to 10.

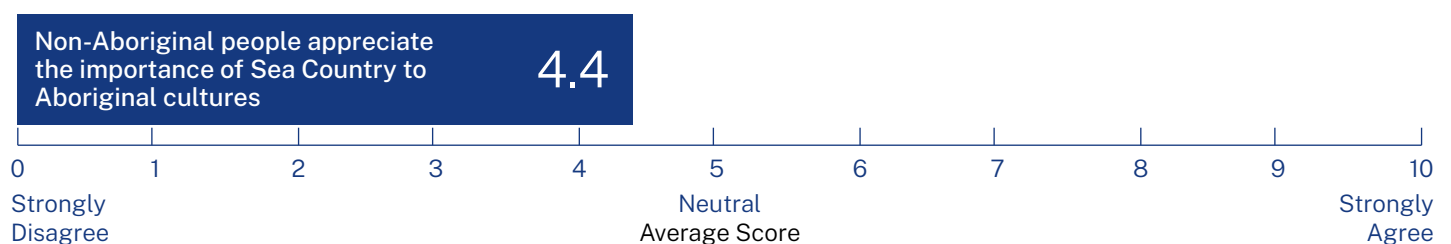


Figure 6: Perceived appreciation of Sea Country's cultural importance by non-Aboriginal people at a statewide level.

Caring for Sea Country

Aboriginal people agreed that the health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions, with an average score of 9.2 on a scale from 0 to 10. Nearly 4 in 5 respondents (79%) strongly agreed (giving a score of 10 out of 10).

There was also a strong feeling of personal responsibility, with 73% agreeing strongly they have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country (mean score of 8.8).

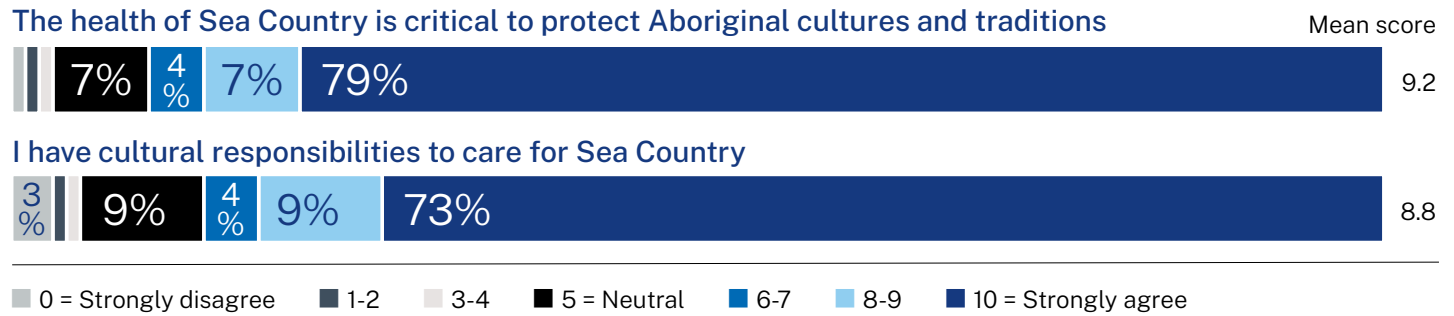


Figure 7: Attitudes to caring for Sea Country at a Statewide level.



Image: Wagonga Rangers litter removal – “caring for country”. Location: Handkerchief Beach Narooma.

When asked what caring for Sea Country means to them, Aboriginal people provided a range of different responses. The 2 most common were:



Keeping it clean

19%



Taking care of or protecting Sea Country in general

19%

“Ensuring that all living things in Sea Country including people, are well and healthy and that we can hunt, gather, tell stories, sing and dance for Sea Country, so that it connects with us and we connect with it and care for it.”

The next 3 most common responses highlighted the cultural significance of Sea Country:

- it means everything/a lot (16%)
- preservation for future generations (15%)
- importance to culture (12%).

“Looking after the waterways and land so our future generations can enjoy the land and have cultural connections.”

Community perceptions of environmental health

Sea Country health is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions.

Health of the natural environment

Over three-quarters of Aboriginal people surveyed said that they at least moderately concerned about 'Environmental problems in NSW that impact the way they value and use Sea Country'. Most indicated they were extremely concerned.

“As people are destroying the habitats that live on the shoreline, and driving cars over sand dunes which are damaging middens that are thousands of years old. So it makes the quality of our local Sea Country poor.”

Environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country

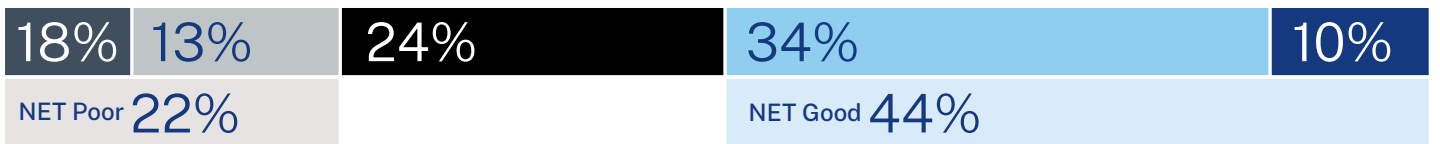


■ Not at all concerned ■ Slightly concerned ■ Somewhat concerned ■ Moderately concerned ■ Extremely concerned

Where 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say' response options were included in questions with a scale, this data was removed prior to analysis and charting to allow accurate calculation of mean scores. For some charts, this means columns may not always add to 100%.

Figure 8: Concern about environmental problems.

Less than half (44%) consider that Sea Country in their local area is currently in good health with only a small minority (10%) perceiving it as 'Very Good'.



■ Very poor ■ Poor ■ Neutral ■ Good ■ Very good

Where 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say' response options were included in questions with a scale, this data was removed prior to analysis and charting to allow accurate calculation of mean scores. For some charts, this means columns may not always add to 100%.

Figure 9: Perceptions of the current health of Sea Country.

“We have clean, nice beaches. We are renowned for our beaches and because of this, I believe council strive to keep them upkept for tourism purposes and work with the Aboriginal community for best practices.”



Image: Coffs Harbour & District Local Aboriginal Land Council. Location: Wills Creek, Woolgoolga.



Positive rating

The primary reasons given for positive views on Sea Country environmental health were:



The clean appearance/ has no rubbish

20%



Abundant seafood

14%



Sea Country is maintained and looked after by community

13%



Negative rating

About a quarter of respondents (22%) rated the health of Sea Country in their local area as poor. The most common reasons for negative rating of health of Sea Country were:



Pollution

28%



Less food/people taking too much

27%



Litter/rubbish

22%

Other reasons included:

- overdevelopment
- land clearing
- flooding and runoff
- not maintained or cared for
- over population
- not enough engagement around management or use of cultural knowledge.

Impact of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country

Aboriginal cultural heritage values within the marine estate are at risk from many threats identified in the statewide TARA. Multiple threats to Aboriginal cultural heritage – the cumulative impacts of pollution, loss of habitat, depletion of stocks, conflict over resources, lack of Aboriginal representation in decision-making and other threats – collectively impact on Aboriginal values derived from Sea Country.

Despite this, the cultural, spiritual and family connections to Sea Country remains strong for many Aboriginal people, and they still carry ongoing obligations to look after it. Over many years, Aboriginal people have advocated for the protection of their cultures against threats, such as overdevelopment, lack of access and pollution. This survey provides an opportunity to monitor these threats over time to see what progress we are making to address them.

“Poor water quality leads to extinction of animals. As an Aboriginal person, of course I am concerned about all animals, all of the environment. Destroy the waterways and the water quality and the culture is being destroyed.”

“All Sea Country wildlife is important to us. We dance and sing for these animals. So, decline in wildlife impacts us mentally.”

Aboriginal people were asked to rate the impact of 11 key threats to their cultural connections to Sea Country. These related to climate change, damage to or loss of habitats, poor water quality, reduction in abundance of seafood, seafood contamination, decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife, illegal activities, limited or lack of access to culturally significant sites and resources due to management, and overcrowding.

At a statewide level, all threats were perceived to have a major impact on cultural connections, with average impact scores ranging between 7.4 and 8.2 (on a scale of 0 to 10).

Further, 43–52% of respondents rated the threats as having a severe impact (a score of 10 out of 10) on cultural connections.

Several themes emerged concerning how the threats had impacted Aboriginal peoples’ connections with Sea Country. These included impacts on:

- emotional, mental and spiritual health
- cultural identity
- cultural practices such as dancing and other forms of connection with Sea Country
- traditional food collection practices
- Aboriginal people’s ability to pass down traditional teachings to future generations.

“Climate change is ruining the environment for the next generations. This impacts on how we can teach the young ones about the environment.”

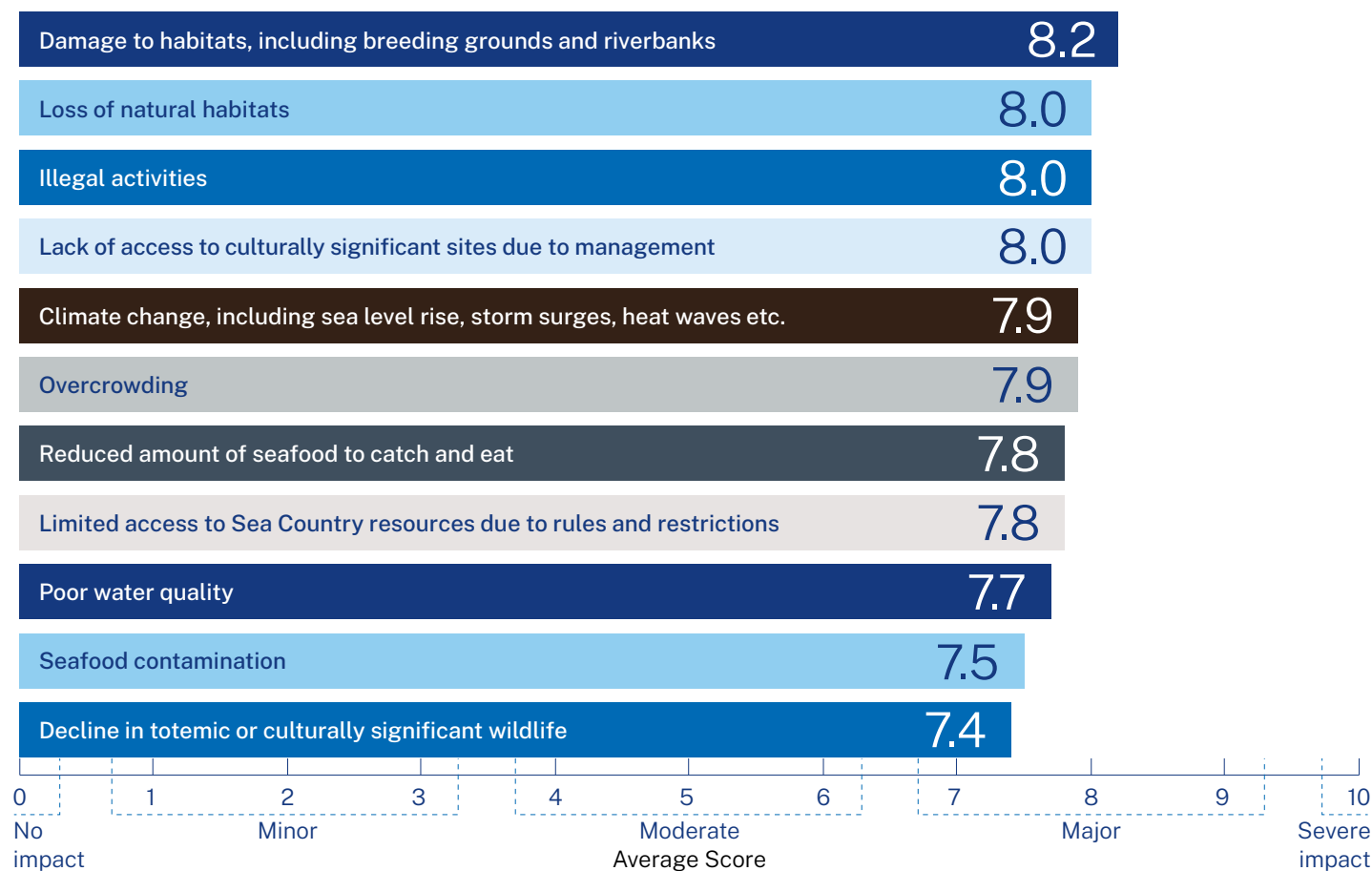


Figure 10: Impacts of key threats to cultural connections with Sea Country.

Perceptions of and attitudes to Sea Country management

Overall, Aboriginal people were dissatisfied with management of Sea Country of restrictions on cultural activities, poor engagement and communication about decisions from the NSW Government, and a lack of opportunities for employment, training and joint management.

Satisfaction with Sea Country management

Overall, Aboriginal people were dissatisfied with management of Sea Country. For all 4 areas measured, at least one in 5 respondents (20%) reported they were 'not satisfied at all' (a score of 0 out of 10). Aboriginal people were mostly dissatisfied that current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights (3.7). A similar level of dissatisfaction was also reported for the statement that 'current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions' (3.9).

Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations

4.3

Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations

4.0

Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions

3.9

Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights

3.7

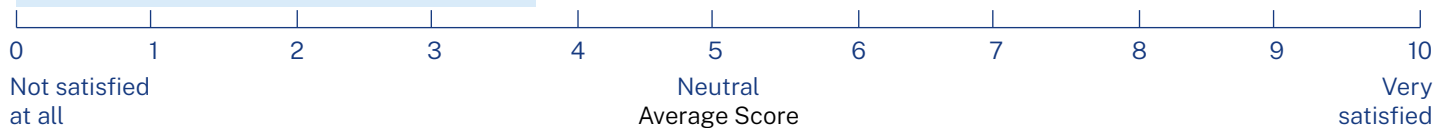


Figure 11: Satisfaction with Sea Country management.

Reasons identified by Aboriginal people for their dissatisfaction with management of Sea Country included overdevelopment and destruction of sites on land due to low understanding of the importance of cultural sites and Sea Country among non-Aboriginal people, fears of being fined or being unable to access areas due to restrictions, and lack of ability to pass on cultural knowledge and practices.

“Current rules do not allow Aboriginal peoples to fish and undertake cultural activities without applying for permits and licences and comfortably practicing events and gathering on the land and sea.”

“Many places we have gone to do cultural activities are now blocked off or got gates now with no access to the sites because of rules.”

“There is currently a prohibition on harvesting pipis. Our children are not learning about their culture and the importance of this food in our diet and stories.”

Satisfaction with engagement and communication on Sea Country management

Overall, Aboriginal people were dissatisfied with engagement and communication from state agencies about how their local Sea Country is managed. Across the statements measured, all mean scores lay between 3.3 and 3.7 on a scale from 0 to 10. At least 23% of respondents indicated they were 'not at all satisfied' (a score of 0 out of 10).

Aboriginal people were least satisfied about:

- how easy it was to find information about how and why decisions are made (3.3)
- how easy it was to understand information about how and why decisions are made (3.4).

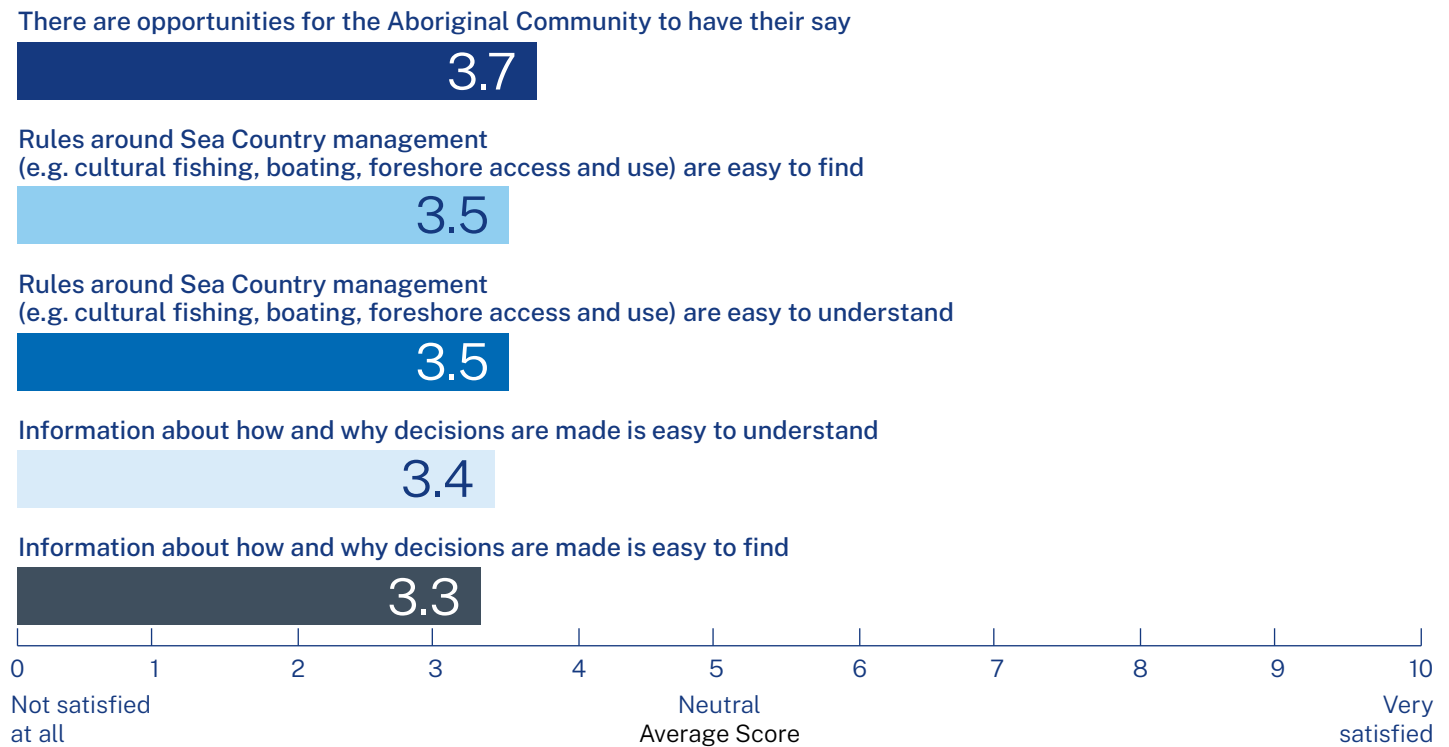


Figure 12: Satisfaction with engagement and communication on Sea Country management.

Satisfaction with consultation

Around one in 10 Aboriginal people (11%) reported that they have been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about management of Sea Country. Most people reported that they have not been consulted (75%).

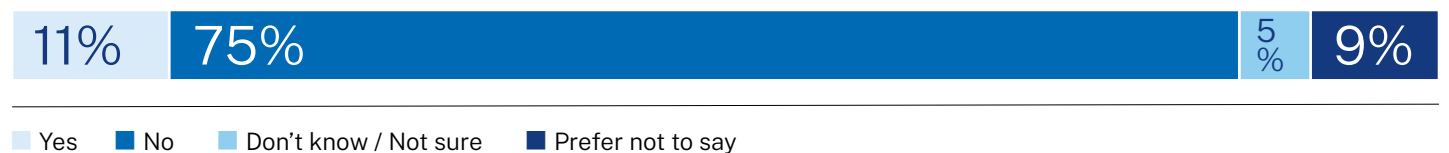


Figure 13: Participation in consultations on Sea Country management.

Satisfaction with NSW Government’s approach to consultation

Aboriginal people who have been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country were then asked to rate their satisfaction with key aspects of the NSW Government’s approach to consultation.

At a statewide level, Aboriginal people were dissatisfied with these components of Sea Country management, with similar levels of dissatisfaction observed across the board. Aboriginal people mainly were dissatisfied with the statements that:

- government has acted on issues raised by their community (2.2)
- rights as Traditional Owners are adequately recognised in current management (2.3)
- Aboriginal cultures are understood by government staff who engage with their community (2.4).

People with cultural authority are being consulted

3.1

Traditional Owners are actively involved in government decision making

2.7

Cultural knowledge is used in decision making

2.6

Aboriginal cultures are understood by government staff who engage with your community

2.4

Rights as Traditional Owners are adequately recognised in current management

2.3

Government have acted on issues raised by your community

2.2

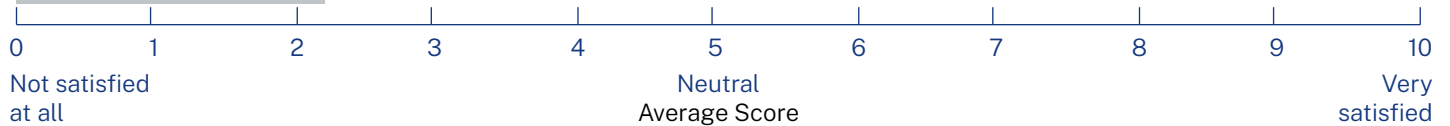


Figure 14: Satisfaction with NSW Government’s approach to consultation at a Statewide level.



Image: Many marine estate management strategy projects and consultation at this site. Background image -Umbarra “black duck painting”. Location: Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council.

Perceptions of opportunities related to Sea Country

Overall, Aboriginal people disagreed that there are opportunities related to Sea Country, such as training, employment and joint management. Across the statements measured, all mean scores lay between 3.7 and 4.0 on a scale from 0 to 10, and at least 22% indicated they 'strongly disagreed' (a score of 0 out of 10).

Levels of disagreement were highest with the idea that there are opportunities for developing Aboriginal fishing and aquaculture interests (3.7), in addition to opportunities for outright (3.7) or joint (3.8) management of Sea Country by Aboriginal people.

There are opportunities for employment or business ownership related to Sea Country (e.g. eco-tourism, management, boat charters)

4.0

There are opportunities for training and education on Sea Country (e.g. boat licence, ranger, marine wildlife responses and rescues)

4.0

There are opportunities for joint management of Sea Country

3.8

There are opportunities for Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country

3.7

There are opportunities for developing Aboriginal commercial fishing and aquaculture interests

3.7

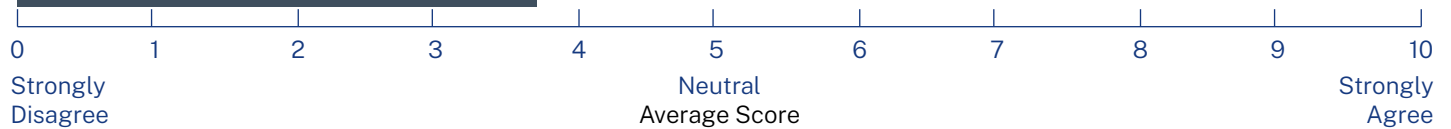


Figure 15: Perceptions of opportunities related to Sea Country.



Image: Joonga Land & Water Aboriginal Corporation launch their new marine tourism venture. Location: Wagonga Inlet.

Employment related to Sea Country

Aboriginal people were asked if they currently receive income from work that relates to Sea Country. Just 5% reported that they did receive income from this source.

Among those who have received an income:

- More than one in 4 (29%) reported that they received this income from work in Sea Country management or research (e.g. for government, universities or other organisations).
- One in 5 received this income for work in cultural tourism (21%), Sea Country education (18%), or arts and crafts made from Sea Country resources or inspired by Sea Country (also 18%).
- More than half were in full-time employment (57%). One in 10 (11%) were part-time and 18% were casual.

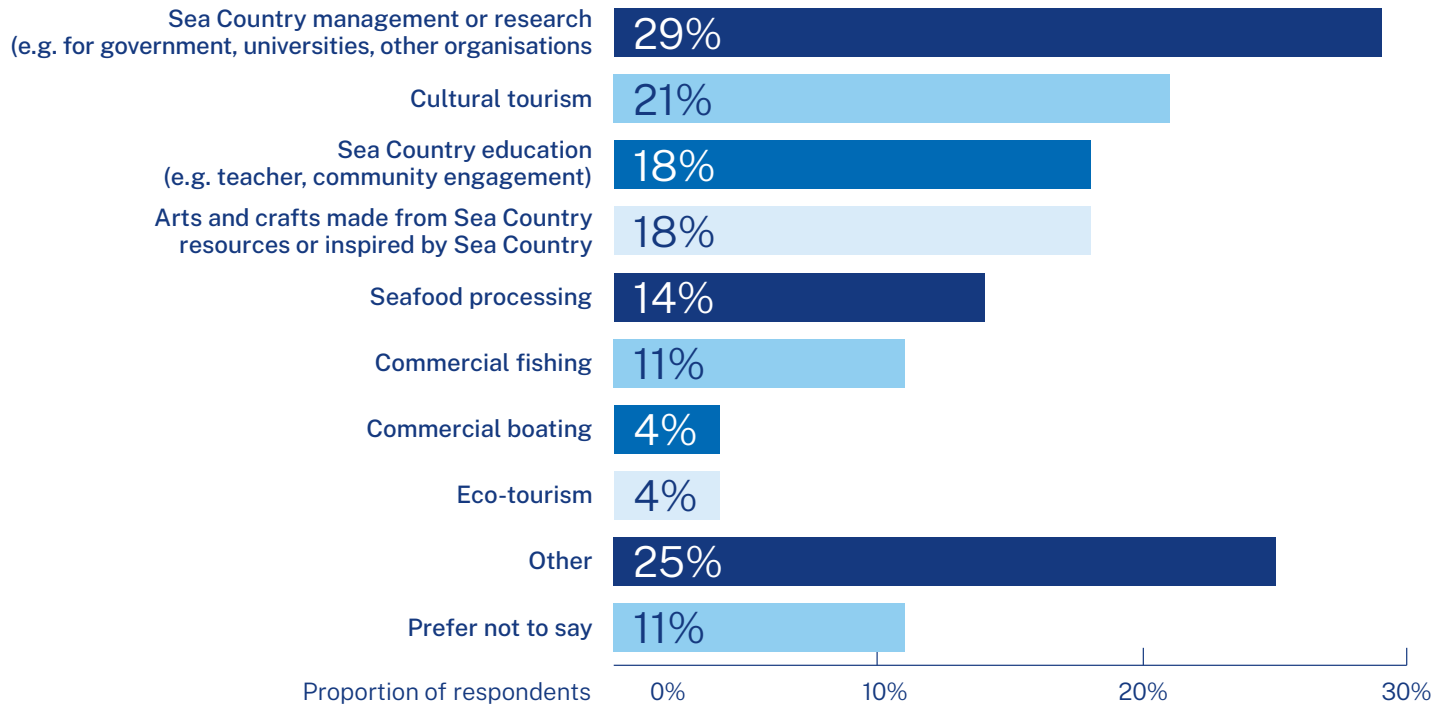


Figure 16: Types of jobs related to Sea Country.



Image: MiiMi rangers Bowraville recycling plastic oyster barrels. Location: Bowraville.

Involvement and interest in government-led Sea Country programs

At a statewide level, one in 7 Aboriginal people (14%) had been involved in programs related to caring for Sea Country (e.g. clean ups, replanting native flora, bird monitoring). One in 10 Aboriginal people (10%) had been involved in Sea Country education and awareness programs.

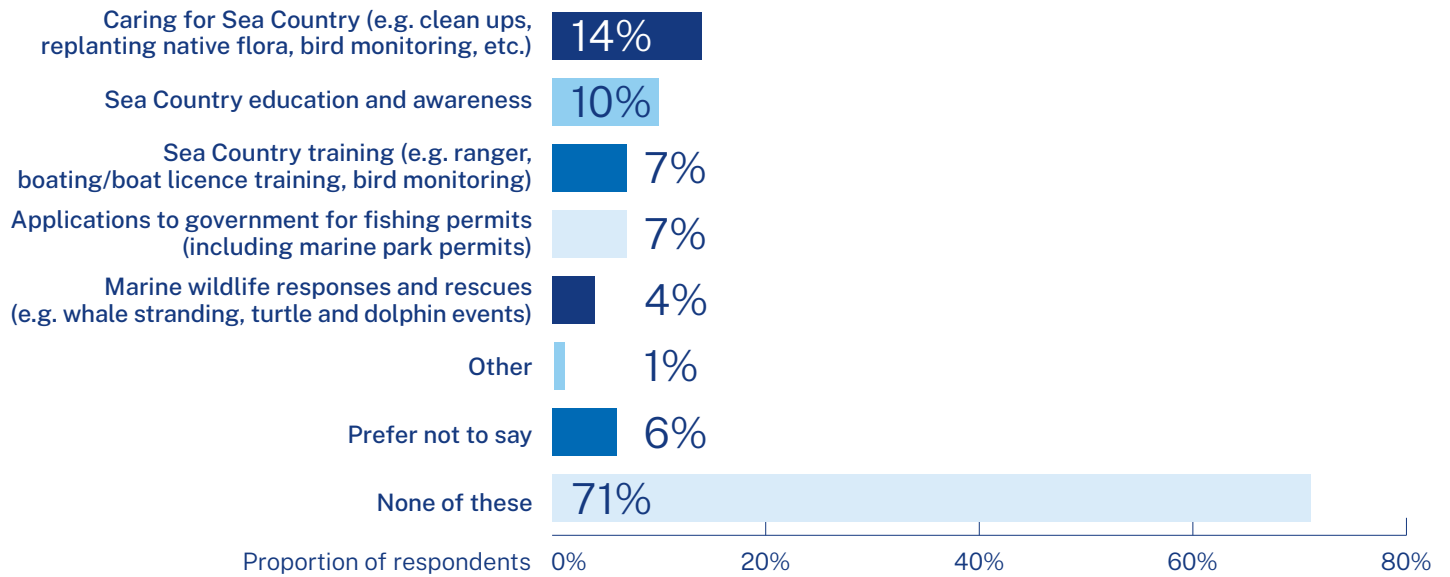


Figure 17: Involvement in government-led programs related to Sea Country.

Around half indicated that they were interested in being involved with most of these government programs in the future. Interest was highest for:

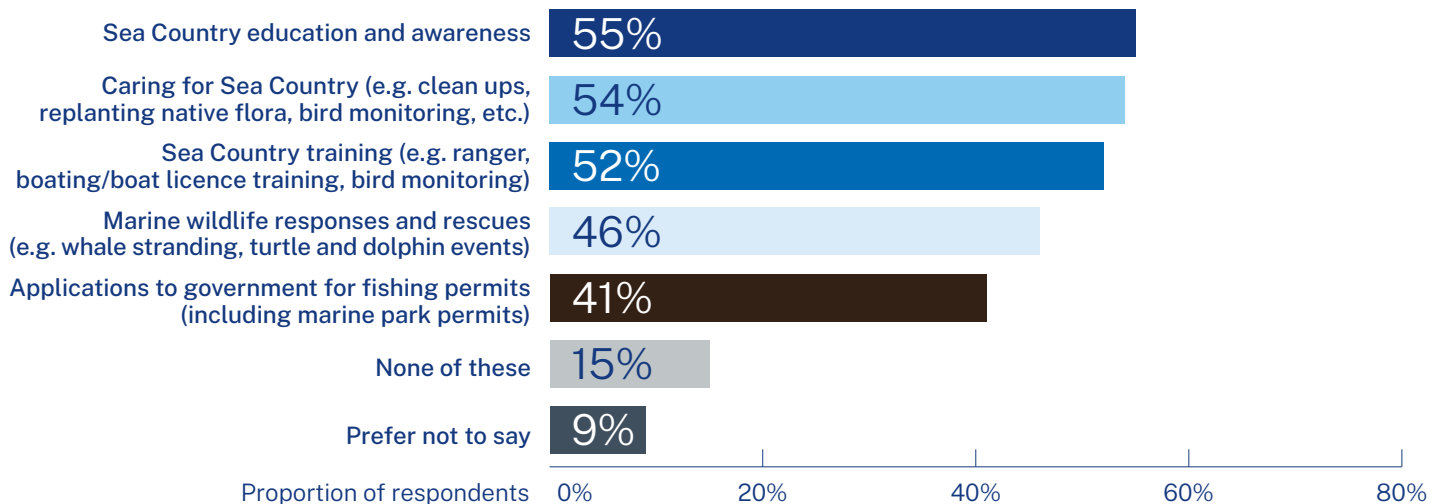


Figure 18: Interest in government-led programs related to Sea Country.

Appendix 1

Snapshot of regional and statewide findings

Snapshot - Ballina (Bundjalung)

This snapshot summaries the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Ballina location, 52 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Ballina	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	58% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	62% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	65% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	48% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	69% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	52% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	60% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.6/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.7/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.6/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.4/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.2/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.5/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	80% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –14% Good –32% Poor –18% Very Poor –4%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Ballina	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	8.7/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	8.8/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	9.0/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	8.9/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	8.5/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	7.7/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	8.8/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	8.3/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	8.4/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	8.7/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	7.7/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	4.5/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	5.0/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	4.2/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.1/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.5/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	4.0/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	3.4/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	3.7/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	3.4/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -4% No -85% of people	Yes -11% No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	5.2/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.1/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	4.7/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	5.0/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	4.6/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Coffs Harbour (Gumbayngirr)

This snapshot summaries the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Coffs Harbour location, 64 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Coffs Harbour	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	59% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	88% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	80% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	59% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	80% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	66% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	53% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.6/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.9/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.8/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.9/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.5/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.5/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	88% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –2% Good –14% Poor –16% Very Poor –46%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Coffs Harbour	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	9.1/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	8.8/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	9.2/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	9.0/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	9.0/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	9.3/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	9.1/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	8.5/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	8.4/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	8.9/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	8.5/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	3.7/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	2.9/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	2.5/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	2.7/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	2.4/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	2.1/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	2.1/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	2.0/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	2.1/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -3% No -97% of people	Yes -11% No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	1.7/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	1.6/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	1.7/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	1.6/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	1.2/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot -Kempsey (Dainggatti)

This snapshot summaries the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Kempsey location, 40 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Kempsey	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	48% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	73% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	83% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	60% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	70% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	33% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	20% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.7/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.5/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.8/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.9/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.2/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.1/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	70% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –23% Good – 72% Poor –0% Very Poor –0%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Kempsey	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	8.5/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	8.1/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	6.9/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	7.7/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	8.0/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	7.4/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	7.5/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	7.1/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	6.8/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	7.6/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	7.2/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	5.3/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	5.5/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	5.5/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	5.3/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.8/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	4.9/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	5.0/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	5.1/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	5.2/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -3% No -84% of people	Yes -11% No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	4.7/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	4.0/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	4.1/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	4.3/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	4.0/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Port Macquarie (Biripi)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Port Macquarie location, 49 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Port Macquarie	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	47% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	90% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	63% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	65% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	73% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	51% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	51% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.3/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.4/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.0/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.3/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.5/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.0/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	88% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –6%	Very good –10%
	Good –61%	Good –34%
	Poor –8%	Poor –13%
	Very Poor –2%	Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Port Macquarie	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	8.0/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	7.6/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	7.5/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	7.6/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	7.6/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	7.8/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	7.3/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	7.6/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	7.3/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	7.1/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	7.2/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	5.0/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	4.1/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	4.6/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.5/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.2/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	4.2/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	4.2/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	4.0/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	3.7/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -23% of people No -73% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	4.8/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.2/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	4.8/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	3.8/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	4.7/10	3.7/10
<p>³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact</p> <p>⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied</p> <p>⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied</p> <p>⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree</p>		

Snapshot - Port Stephens (Worimi)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Port Stephens location, 83 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Port Stephens	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	83% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	89% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	93% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	89% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	87% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	89% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	81% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.9/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.8/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.7/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	10/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.7/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.9/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	96% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –5% Good –45% Poor –0% Very Poor –0%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Port Stephens	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	9.2/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	9.5/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	9.3/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	8.8/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	9.0/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	9.5/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	9.6/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	9.3/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	9.4/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	9.6/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	9.1/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	2.1/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	2.3/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	1.9/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	2.1/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	1.8/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	1.6/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	1.8/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	1.6/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	1.8/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -49% of people No -10% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	1.5/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	1.7/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	1.5/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	1.5/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	1.6/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Newcastle (Awabakal/Darkinjung)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Newcastle location, 64 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Newcastle	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	6% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	88% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	19% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	36% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	72% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	25% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	2% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	7.2/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	8.0/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	7.6/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	5.5/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	7.3/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	4.7/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	21% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –3%	Very good –10%
	Good –17%	Good –34%
	Poor –5%	Poor –13%
	Very Poor –2%	Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Newcastle	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	8.0/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	6.3/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	6.8/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	5.9/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	6.1/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	4.8/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	4.6/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	4.7/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	5.3/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	3.3/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	4.9/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	5.7/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	4.8/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	5.3/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.7/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.9/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	4.9/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	4.8/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	4.6/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	4.4/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -0% of people No -98% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	5.1/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.2/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	5.2/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	4.9/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	5.1/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Gosford (Kuring-gai)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Gosford location, 34 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Gosford	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	64% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	74% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	24% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	47% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	71% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	35% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	56% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.0/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	8.9/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	8.5/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.0/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.5/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	8.9/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	76% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –6%	Very good –10%
	Good –29%	Good –34%
	Poor –35%	Poor –13%
	Very Poor –9%	Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Gosford	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	6.7/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	6.9/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	7.1/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	6.5/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	6.8/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	7.2/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	5.8/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	6.0/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	6.3/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	5.4/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	5.9/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	4.1/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	3.6/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	4.6/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.0/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.5/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	5.0/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	5.1/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	4.3/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	4.4/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes-0% of people No-79% of people	Yes-11% of people No-75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	5.7/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.6/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	4.9/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	5.3/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	5.5/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - La Perouse (Eora)

This snapshot summaries the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the La Perouse location, 47 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	La Perouse	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	41% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	79% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	49% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	36% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	53% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	51% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	51% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.7/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.5/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.5/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.4/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.5/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	8.9/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	83% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –6% Good –6% Poor –38% Very Poor –13%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	La Perouse	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	8.4/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	8.8/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	8.3/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	8.5/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	7.9/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	8.4/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	8.2/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	8.2/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	8.8/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	8.9/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	8.5/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	4.2/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	3.8/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	4.7/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.0/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	4.0/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	3.5/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	3.6/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	3.2/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	3.4/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -2% of people No -89% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	4.6/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.6/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	4.5/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	4.4/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	4.5/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Wollongong (Tharawal)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Wollongong location, 30 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Wollongong	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	20% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	60% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	50% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	57% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	50% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	43% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	60% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	8.4/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	8.6/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	8.4/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	8.7/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.2/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.1/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	81% "at least moderately concerned"	76% 'at least moderately concerned'
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –3% Good –37% Poor –17% Very Poor –10%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Wollongong	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	7.5/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	7.8/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	7.8/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	7.7/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	7.8/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	8.3/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	7.5/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	7.8/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	7.3/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	7.4/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	7.0/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	5.1/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	5.4/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	5.3/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	4.6/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	6.2/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	5.4/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	4.9/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	5.3/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	5.9/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes - 7% of people No - 83% of people	Yes - 11% of people No - 75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	6.5/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	6.0/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	5.9/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	5.9/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	6.6/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Moruya (Yuin)

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Moruya location, 69 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Moruya	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	32% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	54% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	64% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	59% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	58% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	72% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	30% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.7/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.5/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.4 /10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	9.5/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.5/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	9.4/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	76% “at least moderately concerned”	76% ‘at least moderately concerned’
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –21% Good –35% Poor –12% Very Poor –3%	Very good –10% Good –34% Poor –13% Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Moruya	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	7.0/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	7.0/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	6.2/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	8.4/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	7.0/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	7.3/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	7.5/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	7.9/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	6.4/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	5.9/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	6.0/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	4.2/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	4.2/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	3.2/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	2.8/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	2.4/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	2.1/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	2.3/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	2.5/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	2.1/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -3% of people No -83% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	2.5/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	2.6/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	2.7/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	2.3/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	2.6/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Snapshot - Eden (Yuin)

This snapshot summaries the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the *Connections to Sea Country – Aboriginal people of coastal NSW (Wave 1)*.

The sample should be considered a snapshot of participants, rather than a representation of the views of all Aboriginal peoples of coastal NSW or particular communities.

Note: A total 562 Aboriginal people were surveyed statewide. In the Eden location, 30 Aboriginal people were surveyed.

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Eden	Statewide
Community use of the NSW marine estate		
How often do you participate in cultural activities or traditions in your Sea Country area?	53% at least once per week	48% at least once per week
Three most common cultural activities:		
• Recreation, e.g. swimming, walking, surfing, snorkelling, boating	47% of people	75% of people
• Hook and line fishing	53% of people	61% of people
• Camping or staying and being on Sea Country	37% of people	57% of people
Most common other cultural activities and traditions		
• Cultural celebrations	47% of people	69% of people
• Funerals/sorry business	57% of people	56% of people
• Having passed on or received cultural knowledge responsibilities to care for Sea Country	23% of people	45% of people
Importance of Sea Country to quality of life		
How important is Sea Country in contributing to your quality of life? ¹	9.3/10	9.3/10
How important is Sea Country in contributing to the following parts of your life? ²		
• Spending time/socialising with family and community	9.5/10	9.4/10
• Cultural identity	9.4/10	9.3/10
• Emotional and mental health	8.9/10	9.1/10
Caring for Sea Country		
How much do you agree with the following statements?		
• The health of Sea Country is critical to protect Aboriginal cultures and traditions	9.2/10	9.2/10
• I have cultural responsibilities to care for Sea Country	8.6/10	8.8/10
Community perceptions of environmental health		
How concerned are you about environmental problems that impact the way you value and use Sea Country?	56% "at least moderately concerned"	76% 'at least moderately concerned'
How would you rate the current health of Sea Country in your local area?	Very good –30%	Very good –10%
	Good –27%	Good –34%
	Poor –13%	Poor –13%
	Very Poor –0%	Very Poor –8%

¹ 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

² 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Key questions	Percentage or Average Score	
	Eden	Statewide
Impacts of key threats on cultural connections with Sea Country		
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your cultural connections to Sea Country in your local area? ³		
• Damage to habitats, including breeding grounds and riverbanks	5.8/10	8.2/10
• Loss of natural habitats	6.2/10	8.0/10
• Illegal activities	6.6/10	8.0/10
• Lack of access to culturally significant sites due to management	6.2/10	8.0/10
• Climate change	6.5/10	7.9/10
• Overcrowding	5.8/10	7.9/10
• Reduced amount of seafood to catch and eat	6.9/10	7.8/10
• Limited access to Sea Country resources due to rules and restrictions	6.2/10	7.8/10
• Poor water quality	6.8/10	7.7/10
• Seafood contamination	5.2/10	7.5/10
• Decline in totemic or culturally significant wildlife	5.9/10	7.4/10
Perceptions of/attitudes to Sea Country management		
Thinking of Sea Country in your local area, how satisfied are you with: ⁴		
• Culturally significant sites found on land will be preserved for future generations	6.6/10	4.3/10
• Culturally significant sites that are now underwater will be preserved for future generations	6.5/10	4.0/10
• Current rules allow me to easily undertake cultural activities and traditions	6.2/10	3.9/10
• Current rules around Sea Country recognise Aboriginal cultural rights	6.4/10	3.7/10
Thinking about the way Sea Country in your local area is managed, how satisfied are you with: ⁵		
• There are opportunities for the Aboriginal community to have their say	5.8/10	3.7/10
• Rules around Sea Country management (e.g. cultural fishing, boating) are easy to find	6.7/10	3.5/10
• Rules around Sea Country management are easy to understand	5.9/10	3.5/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to understand	5.1/10	3.4/10
• Information about how and why decisions are made is easy to find	5.1/10	3.3/10
Have you previously been consulted by the NSW Government to talk about the management of Sea Country?	Yes -4% of people No -79% of people	Yes -11% of people No -75% of people
How much do you agree with the following statements: ⁶		
There are opportunities for:		
• employment or business ownership related to Sea Country	5.9/10	4.0/10
• training & education on Sea Country	5.8/10	4.0/10
• joint management of Sea Country	5.9/10	3.8/10
• Aboriginal people to outright manage Sea Country	6.5/10	3.7/10
• developing Aboriginal commercial fishing & aquaculture interests	6.0/10	3.7/10

³ 0 = No impact, 1-3 = Minor, 4-6 = Moderate, 7-9 = Major, 10 = Severe impact

⁴ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁵ 0 = Not satisfied at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very satisfied

⁶ 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree



The complete reports can be found at
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