

OFFSHORE ARTIFICIAL REEFS

There are currently two offshore artificial reefs in the Hawkesbury bioregion, and two more are approved to be deployed.

The Sydney Offshore Artificial Reef is located east of The Gap, near South Head, at the entrance to Port Jackson. It is a single module and was deployed in 2011 in approximately 40 metres of water. It was deployed using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust and is intended to benefit recreational fishers.

The Southern Sydney 'JD' Artificial Reef is about 2.5 kilometres southeast of Jibbon Point, offshore from the Royal National Park. It sits in about 30 metres of water and consists of 36 concrete modules over two areas measuring 100 metres by 100 metres each. It was deployed in 2017 using funds from the Recreational Fishing Trust and is intended to benefit recreational fishers.

Two additional artificial reefs are approved for deployment off the Newcastle area (Swansea) and Wollongong (Port Kembla). Commonwealth approval has been received and funding has been approved from the Recreational Fishing Trust.

It is proposed to establish special purpose zones at each of these four areas.

CURRENT MANAGEMENT

Line fishing and spearfishing are permitted under general NSW fishing rules and regulations, and responsible fishing actions are promoted by a code of conduct. Scuba diving is not recommended due to safety concerns.

SITE OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives for the proposed offshore artificial reef sites are to:

- continue to provide for marine economic opportunities that are consistent with ecologically sustainable development
- establish and maintain public infrastructure to support access and use of the bioregion
- reduce conflicts between users of the marine estate
- provide enhanced recreational experiences for particular user groups
- reduce regulatory complexity in the bioregion to improve self-compliance.

The secondary objectives that apply to this site are listed in Table 5.

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES

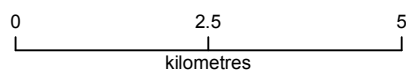
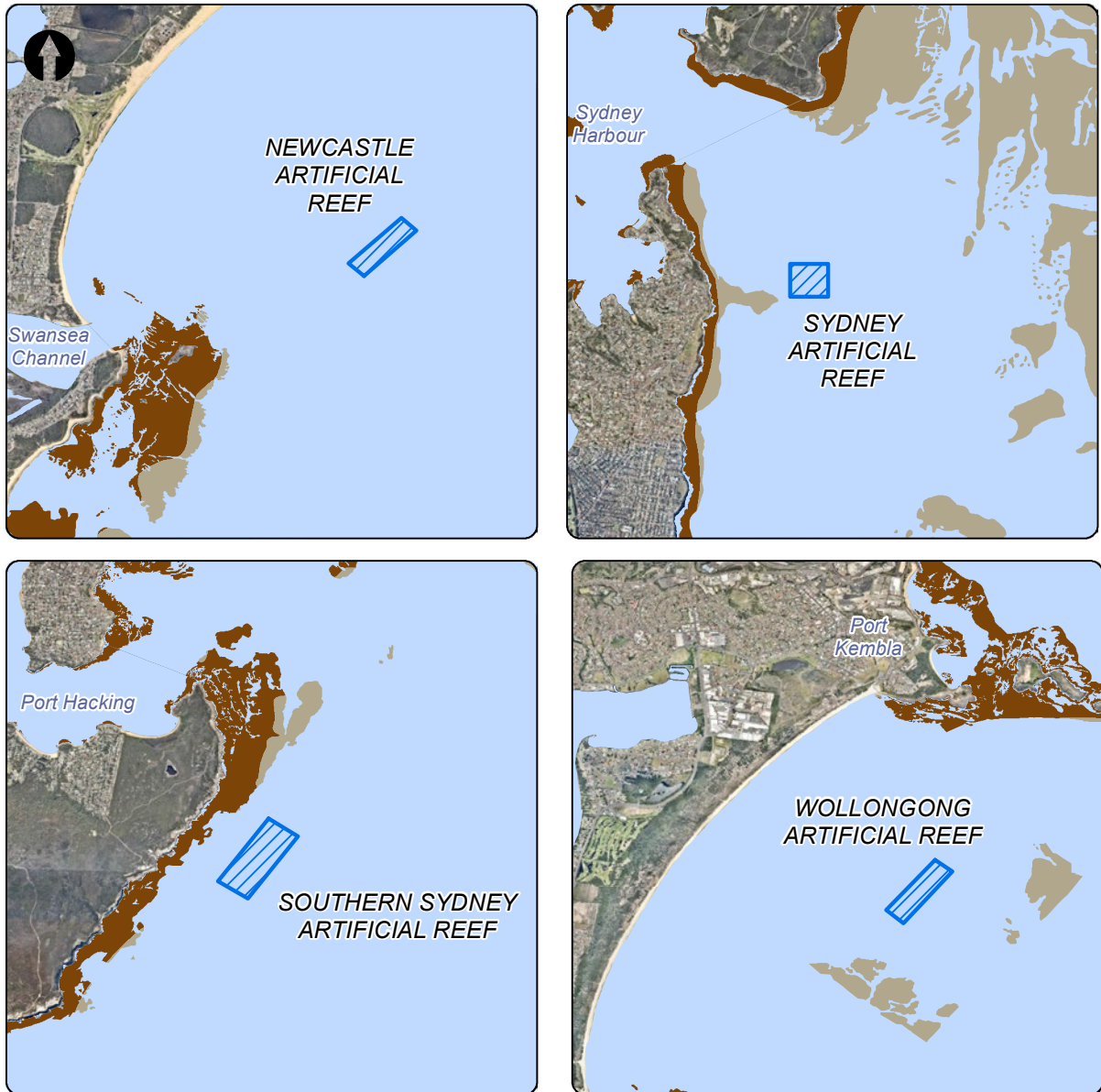
The artificial reefs are very popular with boat-based fishers. Some conflict has arisen in the past with scuba diving groups visiting the reefs.

PRIORITY THREATS TARGETED TO ENHANCE BENEFITS AT THIS SITE




The threats that will be addressed at this site and expected benefits to be enhanced are listed in Table 49.

Table 49. Threats and expected benefits

	Environmental	Social, cultural, economic				
Threats	 Lack of access infrastructure	 Conflict	 Regulation			
Benefits	 Participation (wellbeing)	 Participation (socialising)	 Enjoyment (biodiversity & beauty)	 Enjoyment (consumptive use)	 Viability of business	 Individual enjoyment



Proposal

	Special Purpose Zone		Reef 0-20
	Reef 20+		

NOTE: see Cape Banks map for Botany Bay Artificial Reefs









Figure 32. Offshore Artificial Reefs

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PROPOSED MANAGEMENT RULES

It is proposed to establish a 21 hectare special purpose zone surrounding the Sydney Artificial Reef, a 42 hectare special purpose zone around the Southern Sydney Artificial Reef, and 22 hectare special purpose zones at the Newcastle and Wollongong Artificial Reef locations; this will formalise the management rules that are currently in place as a code of conduct. No changes to management rules are proposed.

Table 50. Current activities and suggested permissible activities in the proposed Offshore Artificial Reefs sites

Offshore Artificial Reefs	 Boating	 Anchoring	 Line fishing	 Spear fishing	 Scuba diving /snorkelling	 Commercial fishing
Current	✓	✓	✓	✓	× ¹	×
Proposed special purpose zone	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×

1 Currently not advised under voluntary code of conduct

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Feedback from recreational fishers identified safety issues and conflicts with scuba divers at recreational fishing infrastructure sites, such as fish aggregating devices and artificial reefs. Some submissions proposed a dive closure or exclusion zone at these sites as a way to manage these issues. The use of artificial reefs to offset site closures for line fishers and spearfishers was also proposed.