



Photo: Destination NSW

Newsletter no.1

INTRODUCING THE HAWKESBURY SHELF MARINE BIOREGION ASSESSMENT

The **Marine Estate Management Authority's** vision for the NSW marine estate is to have a healthy coast and sea managed for the greatest well-being of the community, now and into the future.

The Authority is developing options to enhance marine biodiversity conservation within the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion, while achieving balanced outcomes including opportunities for boating, fishing and other uses. Community input is a critical part of this project and we also know it is important for you to have your say.

The **bioregion** extends from Newcastle in the north to Shellharbour in the south and includes the coastline, estuaries, coastal lakes and lagoons, beaches and ocean waters out to three nautical miles.

This first newsletter is to introduce you to the project, let you know when and how you can have your say and how your information will be used.

The project involves four steps as illustrated in Figure 1:

1. Information collection
2. Threat and risk assessment
3. Development of management options
4. Recommendations to Government

You can have your say at STEPS 1 and 3 with the information you provide informing STEPS 2 and 4.

The entire bioregion will be assessed but the assessment will also specifically consider 11 sites previously identified by the community and four other aquatic reserves in the bioregion. You will be able to nominate your priority sites for consideration

during the assessment. Existing management arrangements will continue to apply at all sites until the assessment is completed.

STEP 1 – WE ARE HERE NOW!

Have your say via a **web portal**. This is open to all community members.

Let us know:

- » your favourite or your priority sites and what you do there,
- » what threats you think affect the sites,
- » how we can better manage these sites.

You can also provide comments on the bioregion generally.

STEP 2

The information you provide at STEP 1 will be used in an expert-led threat and risk assessment to prioritise threats, and will also assist in developing management options to manage these threats, enhance marine biodiversity conservation and maximise community benefits.

STEP 3

The outcomes from STEP 2 will be made public in an 'Options Paper' for you to provide your comments on the findings.

STEP 4

The information you provide in STEP 3 will help us finalise options to be submitted to Government.

Figure 1 How community information is included in the Hawkesbury Shelf project



Communication aim: Provide clear information to the community at all steps in the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment

<p>Information collated from the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » for the bioregion, » for pre-identified sites, » for additional sites 	<p>Collated information is used to inform the threat and risk assessment</p> <p>Expert opinion and community information is used to identify priority threats to the benefits derived from the marine estate</p>	<p>Public exhibition of the draft management options to address priority threats</p> <p>Released via the MEMA website and submissions invited. Community views will help refine the management options</p>	<p>Options submitted to Government for consideration and next steps</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » web portal » workshops, meetings with agencies and peak community groups 	<p>Aim: Include community and expert views in the application of the threat and risk assessment for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion.</p>	<p>Aim: Consult with the community and experts on cost-effective management options to respond to priority threats and opportunities through public exhibition of an options paper.</p>	
<p>Aim: Gather community and expert views on the values, benefits, threats and opportunities for the Hawkesbury Shelf. Identify sites that are important to the community.</p>			

We will keep you informed about where the project is up to via regular newsletters and the marine estate website www.marine.nsw.gov.au

If someone you know would also like to receive updates on the Hawkesbury Shelf project or other marine estate projects please advise them to email contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au and provide their postcode and email address.

We would appreciate feedback on this newsletter, e.g. did it explain the project clearly, what other information would you like to see? Please email your comments to contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au

HAVE YOUR SAY

The web portal to have your say on the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment is now available.

Go to www.marine.nsw.gov.au and follow the links

Or click on this link [Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion web portal](#)

Or if you don't have access to a computer, survey forms will be available at DPI Fisheries offices and you can post or fax your completed survey marked to:

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