

# MARINE ESTATE REFORMS NEWSLETTER



Photo: Courtesy of Destination NSW

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first edition of our new marine estate reforms newsletter which aims to keep our valued stakeholders updated on implementation of the reforms. The newsletter will provide regular progress updates and alert you to engagement opportunities as they arise.

**To obtain background information on the reforms visit the marine estate website.**

**Please forward this newsletter to others who may find it of interest and encourage them to sign up to receive regular updates on the reforms directly.**

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Photos: (Top) Courtesy Anthony Heiser; (Bottom) © David Harasti

## GOVERNMENT RE-SETS THE PRIORITIES FOR MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The NSW Government is re-setting the ambitious agenda for the marine estate reforms to ensure evidence-based, holistic and cohesive management of some of the State's most valued assets – its coastline, estuaries and marine waters. The revised agenda takes into account key reforms that are at critical stages of development and implementation relating to the management of the NSW marine estate, including the commercial fisheries business adjustment program, coastal reforms, regional ports strategy and Crown land management review.

The Marine Estate Management Authority (Authority) will now progress the Marine Estate Management Strategy (Strategy) with public engagement on the draft Strategy over the next six weeks and a final Strategy to be delivered in early 2018.

This statewide work has also considered feedback from the NSW community on eight proposed management initiatives to enhance marine biodiversity while achieving balanced community outcomes in the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion.

**A summary report detailing the community engagement findings on the Hawkesbury engagement is now available on the marine estate website.**

Some of the initiatives proposed for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion, such as addressing water quality, litter and marine debris, restoring coastal habitats, research priorities, wildlife interactions, improving boating infrastructure and land use planning outcomes, are not bioregion specific. Rather they respond to threats that have been assessed as a priority for the whole of the NSW marine estate.

The NSW Government has tasked the Authority to incorporate the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion assessment's broader initiatives into the statewide Strategy.

Several initiatives for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion are progressing this year including reducing resource use conflict in Pittwater and regional boating strategies for Lake Macquarie and Pittwater. These projects will be headed by the Department of Primary Industries and Transport for NSW respectively.

**Further information is available in the [FAQ's](#) and [media release](#).**

## RELEASE OF THE FIRST DRAFT MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Authority is seeking your views on the draft **Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028**. Please provide feedback via our **online submission** form by Friday 8 December 2017.

The draft Strategy is a first for NSW and is a key deliverable of the marine estate reforms. It outlines the coordinated, evidence-based approach required to manage the priority threats to the marine estate over the next decade.

The draft Strategy identified management priorities based on the findings of the final statewide Threat and Risk Assessment (TARA) and sets the framework and strategic direction for marine estate management over the next decade.

A marine monitoring program for the marine estate is also being developed, which will complement the final Strategy. It will include key performance indicators for monitoring the implementation of management responses in the Strategy as well as actions to address the main environmental, social, economic and cultural knowledge gaps in the NSW marine estate.

**More information on the [Marine Estate Management Strategy](#) can be found on the marine estate website.**







Photo: Courtesy Office of Environment and Heritage

## RELEASE OF THE FINAL STATEWIDE THREAT AND RISK ASSESSMENT

The statewide TARA is a requirement of the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014*. It identifies the threats to the environmental assets and the social, cultural and economic benefits derived from the NSW marine estate. The Authority developed the **TARA Framework** (MEMA 2015) to guide this work.

Engagement on the draft TARA report was undertaken between January and April 2017. Constructive feedback from the community and stakeholders was provided over the 14 week engagement period, which included six stakeholder and 10 Aboriginal workshops along the NSW coast.

The submissions have been carefully analysed and considered in finalising the statewide TARA. A number of risk levels have changed as a result of the new evidence identified during the engagement period.

**Further details on these changes are outlined in the **Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report – draft statewide TARA** which is available on the **marine estate website**.**

## NSW MARINE PROTECTED AREAS POLICY STATEMENT

The **Marine Protected Areas Policy Statement** reaffirms the NSW Government's commitment to maintaining the existing comprehensive network of marine protected areas in NSW and improving their management, within holistic management arrangements for the entire marine estate.

It notes the importance of marine protected areas as a management tool to address priority threats, identified via a robust evidence-based threat and risk assessment, to marine and estuarine habitats and biodiversity and to the social and economic benefits derived from the NSW marine estate.

The statement clarifies the future role and purpose of marine protected areas in marine estate management.

This policy statement supersedes the former NSW Government policy paper "Developing a representative system of marine protected areas in NSW – an overview" (November 2001) and builds on the **"NSW Government Response to the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW"** (March 2013) and the Authority's **"Managing and the NSW Marine Estate: Purpose, Underpinning Principles and Priority Settings"** (November 2013).

## GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE NSW MARINE ESTATE

These guidelines have been developed to assist the Authority in completing steps three and four of the **five-step decision-making process framework for managing the marine estate**. They provide a thorough and detailed process to review, develop, assess and recommend management options to address priority threats arising from a threat and risk assessment.

The aim is to ensure that management effort will be directed to actions that most effectively and cost-effectively deliver on the vision for the marine estate, providing for a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the NSW community, now and in the future.

**You can view the **guidelines** on the **marine estate website**.**

## MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED

The recently published **MEMA Annual Report 2016** provides a summary of progress on the reforms during 2016.



Photo: © Michael Legge-Wilkinson

## HAWKESBURY SHELF MARINE BIOREGION ASSESSMENT – PHASE 2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT RELEASED

The Marine Estate Management Authority has released the **Phase 2: Community Engagement on Suggested Management Initiatives for the bioregion**. This report provides an overview of the outcomes from the community engagement process undertaken from 28 February to 8 May 2016 on the **Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment Discussion Paper – Suggested Management Initiatives**.

Community engagement included an online submissions process, independently facilitated stakeholder workshops and agency led meetings with peak organisations. Over 3,400 submissions and online entries were received during the public exhibition period. Three main themes emerged from the review of responses:

- » widespread concern about the level of biodiversity protection, whether in relation to specific activities or about general conservation aims
- » high personal value for the range of services and uses the bioregion provides
- » individuals and organisations want to safeguard those services and uses.

Given the wide range of personal values and uses, the submissions ranged from full support to complete opposition to one or more of the initiatives. Spatial management for biodiversity conservation and use sharing (Initiative 4) generated the largest amount of interest. Submissions ranged from making the entire region a large multi-use marine park with sanctuary zones to 'no lock-outs', with a range of responses in between.

New evidence has been considered during the finalisation of the bioregion threat and risk assessment, which has now been incorporated into the final **statewide TARA**.

## MARINE ESTATE REGULATION REVIEW

The Marine Estate Management Regulation (the Regulation) supports the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014* in the management of marine parks and aquatic reserves. A review of the Regulation was recently completed to:

- » ensure all provisions are still relevant
- » ensure consistency with other legislation, and
- » determine if management provisions can be improved and/or streamlined.

Community and stakeholder engagement was an essential part of the review. The Regulation was remade and came into force on 1 September 2017.

**More information on the review including a summary report of responses to the public engagement can be found on the marine estate website.**

## MARINE ESTATE EXPERT KNOWLEDGE PANEL APPOINTMENTS

The Marine Estate Knowledge Panel provides independent expert advice to the Authority spanning ecological, economic, social sciences and coastal land use planning. The Panel reports directly to the Authority and includes a chairperson and five core members.

The initial Panel was established in 2013 for a three year term. New appointments have recently been made. They provide considerable expertise in their chosen fields and provide the best mix of multidisciplinary skills and experience across social sciences, environmental economics, biophysical sciences, life sciences, public administration or natural resource management.

Professor Quinton Grafton, Dr Kate Brooks and Mr Peter McGinnity will continue their roles as members and be joined by new members Associate Professor William Glamore, Professor Peter Steinberg and Associate Professor Kate Barclay.

**More information on the Panel and Members is available on the marine estate website.**

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