

## NSW Marine Estate Community Wellbeing Surveys

# NSW Hunter Region



The NSW Government's Marine Estate Community Wellbeing Surveys provide valuable insight into our coastline from residents, youth and visitors. Using the responses to the surveys, we can track the benefits, threats, and trends in community wellbeing over time.

This fact sheet summarises key findings for the Hunter region from *Wave 1* of the Community Wellbeing Surveys.

The Hunter region of NSW extends from Crowdy Head in the north to Swansea in the south and includes the major centres of Forster, Port Stephens and Newcastle.



*“It is life. Our family moved to this area because of the coastal life, the beaches, the habitat, the animals and the nature. It makes my family who we are.”*



“I visit regularly for walking and swimming. It’s an integral part of my life to keep healthy in mind and body.”



Image: Newcastle Harbour, Location: Newcastle.

## Our health. Our coast.

Engaging with the NSW coast provides many wellbeing benefits, including improving our physical and mental health as well as our quality of life.

73% of residents and 61% of youth in our region visit our marine estate at least once per week!



# 8.5/10

Score is given for how important the NSW coast is in contributing to our quality of life.

## Our coast. Our legacy.

Our community considers protecting nature and ensuring that a healthy marine estate can be enjoyed by future generations as important reasons for managing our marine estate (average score of at least 8.6 out of 10 where 10 is ‘very important’).

Our legacy is the coastline we leave behind.



# 8.9/10

Score is given on the importance of passing on a healthy NSW coast to future generations.

## Impacts to our wellbeing.

### Impacts to our marine estate.

Of the eleven key threats, those that have the greatest current impact on community experience in our region include:

- litter (6.5 out of 10 where 10 is a ‘severe impact’)
- illegal behaviour or activities (6.2)
- overcrowding (5.9)
- loss of natural habitats (5.8)
- climate change (5.8).

Our region has moderate impact scores for all threats and are mainly similar to the statewide averages.



# 78%

of residents consider our coastal environment to be in good/very good health.

# Scorecard - results

This snapshot summarises the indicators and regional and statewide average scores given by survey respondents to the key questions in the Coastal Residents<sup>1</sup> Survey 2021.

Question/Indicator	Percentage or Average Score	
	The Hunter	Statewide
<b>Community use of the NSW marine estate</b>		
How often do you visit your local coastal area?	73% at least once per week	64% at least once per week
Top 3 activities undertaken when visiting your local coastal area:		
• Beach going	59% of people	61% of people
• Picnicking, sightseeing, visiting coastal cafes	60% of people	58% of people
• Land-based exercise	63% of people	58% of people
<b>Community perceptions of environmental health</b>		
How would you rate the current health of the natural coastal environment in your local area?	Very good 25% Good 53% Poor 5% Very poor 1%	Very good 27% Good 55% Poor 5% Very poor 1%
<b>Contribution of the NSW marine estate to quality of life</b>		
How important is the NSW coast in contributing to your quality of life? <sup>2</sup>	8.5/10	8.3/10
How important is the NSW coast in contributing to the following aspects of your life? <sup>3</sup>		
• Emotional and mental health	8.1/10	8.1/10
• Physical health	8.0/10	7.9/10
• Spending time/socialising with family and friends	7.7/10	7.7/10
• Nutritional needs	6.6/10	6.6/10
How much do you agree with the following statements <sup>4</sup>		
• I take pride in living on the NSW coast	8.5/10	8.3/10
• I feel a personal connection to the NSW coast	8.0/10	7.9/10
• The NSW coast is part of my identity	7.6/10	7.5/10

<sup>1</sup> Coastal residents defined as at least 18 years old, reside in local region and live within 5 kms of the coast

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

<sup>3</sup> 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

<sup>4</sup> 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

Question/Indicator	Percentage or Average Score	
	The Hunter	Statewide
<b>Threats and impacts on community experience</b>		
How safe do you feel when using the NSW Coast? <sup>5</sup>	8.1/10	8.1/10
How much of an impact do you think the following aspects currently have on your experience of your local coastal areas in the past 12 months? <sup>6</sup>		
• Litter on shorelines or in the water	6.5/10	6.7/10
• Illegal behaviours or activities	6.2/10	6.3/10
• Overcrowding	5.9/10	6.3/10
• Climate change	5.8/10	5.9/10
• Loss of natural habitats	5.8/10	5.9/10
<b>Community stewardship of the NSW marine estate</b>		
Top reasons why it is important to manage different aspects of the coast? <sup>7</sup>		
• Pass on a healthy NSW coast to future generations	8.9/10	8.8/10
• Provide a place where people can connect with nature	8.6/10	8.5/10
• Preserve nature –even though it may never be used or seen by humans	8.6/10	8.5/10
Do you feel responsible for helping maintain a healthy NSW Coast? <sup>8</sup>	7.8/10	7.8/10

<sup>5</sup> 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

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

<sup>7</sup> 0 = Not important at all --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Very important

<sup>8</sup> 0 = Strongly disagree --> 5 = Neutral --> 10 = Strongly agree

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