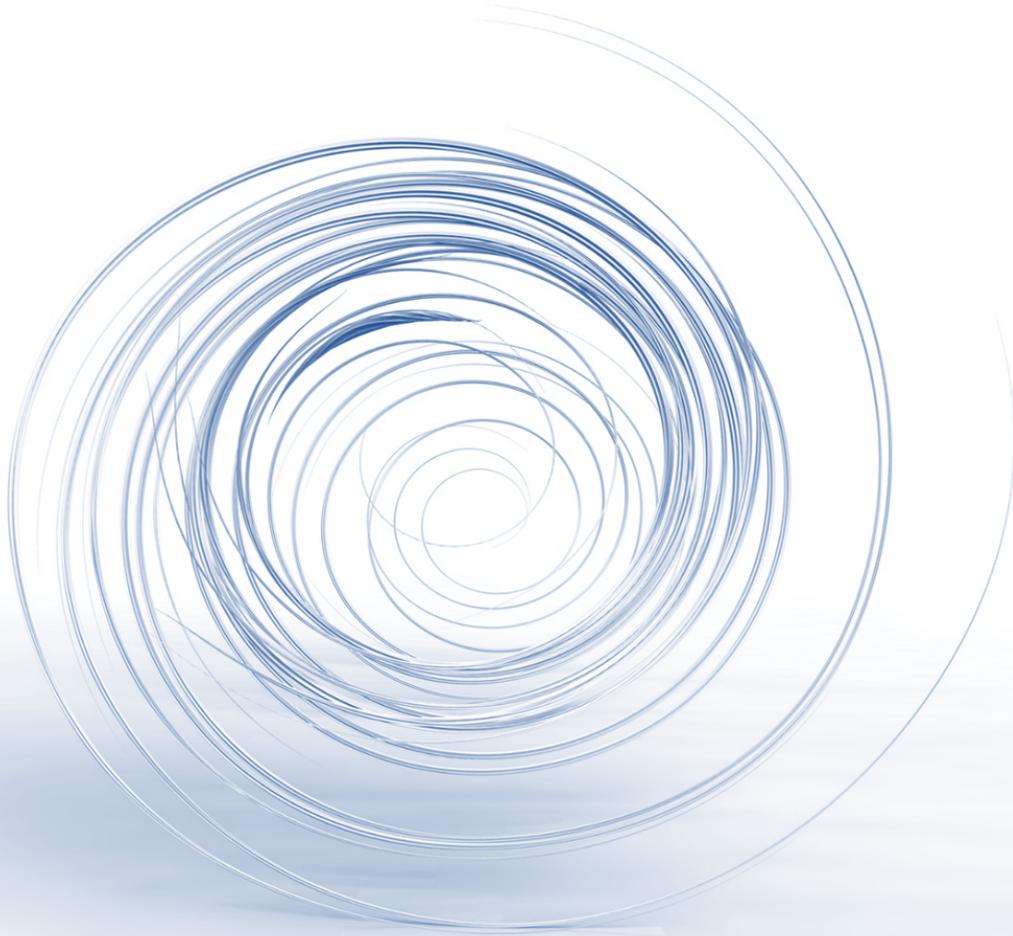




MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

# Annual Report 2020-2021



# Acknowledgement of Aboriginal people

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Aboriginal people hold deep cultural and spiritual connections to the sea.  
They have cared for Sea Country for thousands of years,  
passing on their knowledge and tradition to each new generation.

The NSW Government seeks to work collaboratively with Aboriginal people  
to maintain their social, cultural, economic and spiritual connections  
to the marine estate now and into the future.

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## Marine Estate Management Authority Annual Report 2020-2021

Published December 2021

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PUB21/720

This report covers the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Supplementary report: Marine Estate Management Strategy Implementation Annual Report 2020-2021

### More information

Marine Estate Management Authority [www.marine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marine.nsw.gov.au)

### Acknowledgments

The Authority acknowledges Ministers, government agencies, organisations and individual whose support, collaboration and input has made our work possible. Key contributors include:

- Marine Estate Management Authority
- Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel
- Officers from the following agencies in preparing this report:
  - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
  - Department of Primary Industries
  - Transport for NSW.

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the author or the user's independent adviser.



## Message from the Chair

# Marine Estate Management Authority

The Authority's vision for the NSW marine estate is for 'a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and into the future'.

This year the Authority reports on the second stage of the Strategy with an additional \$28.3 million funding received. It is an ambitious program of works that spans many government agencies and partners to implement 53 actions, over 100 plus projects throughout NSW. Detailed progress on the delivery of the Strategy for the year is reported separately in the [Strategy Implementation Annual Report 2020-2021](#).

The Authority continued to progress the delivery of a new approach to marine park management planning for the NSW mainland marine park network, a significant piece of work undertaken, in consultation with key stakeholders, marine park advisory committees and relevant agencies.

Our achievements and deliverables are reported in further detail in this report.

The NSW marine estate is one of the most significant natural resources of the State. It supports a rich biodiversity, facilitates cultural connection and provides carbon sequestration opportunities and climate regulation. A healthy and productive marine estate is critical to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the 6.9 million people of NSW who live within 50 kilometres of the marine estate. The events of the year have also adversely affected the NSW economy and the social and cultural wellbeing of all its people and communities. The marine estate, a treasured place for both locals and visitors, will play an integral part of the long road to recovery for the people of NSW.

I'd like to thank the members of the Authority, the MEMA Secretariat, those working on the diverse elements of the MEM Strategy and all those who supported us and who provided frank and comprehensive feedback during community consultation on key projects this year.

I look forward to better times ahead, while we continue to strive for improved outcomes for the NSW marine estate and the people of NSW – for now and into the future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Reichelt". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive script.

**Russell Reichelt**

Chair, Marine Estate Management Authority

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# Key deliverables

## CREATING CHANGE



### Marine Estate Management Strategy

NSW Government announced an additional **\$28.3 million** to support the continued delivery of the Strategy. The Strategy addresses priority threats to the environmental assets and social, cultural and economic benefits derived from the NSW marine estate



### Marine Estate Management Act Review

completed the five-year statutory review of the Act in consultation with key stakeholders



### Marine park management planning

continued to progress the delivery of a new approach to marine park management planning in consultation with key stakeholders, marine park advisory committees and relevant agencies



### Launch of the Aboriginal Maritime Safety Plan

the plan will embrace new partnerships to improve our understanding of the issues and help prevent boating incidents involving Aboriginal people



### \$28 million to ramp up boating facilities

the NSW Government, announced 69 successful projects under the **\$28 million** Boating Now Program to improve boating access and safety for local and visiting boaters to enjoy their time on the water with safety and ease.



### \$205 million maritime infrastructure funding

investment in maritime infrastructure and safety upgrade projects will create nearly 1300 jobs across the State

# About us

The **Marine Estate Management Authority** (Authority) advises the NSW Government on the management of the marine estate consistent with the objects of the [Marine Estate Management Act 2014](#). Key functions include undertaking threat and risk assessments, development of management strategies, promoting collaboration and coordination between public authorities in their exercise of functions, and fostering consultation with the community in relation to the management of the marine estate.

The **Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel** (Knowledge Panel) provides independent expert advice to the Authority on matters referred to it by the Authority including environmental, social and economic considerations.

Four **NSW Government agencies** have key responsibilities for managing the marine estate. All four agencies are members of the Authority (Authority agencies):

- Department of Regional NSW - Department of Primary Industries
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Environment, Energy and Science
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Planning and Assessment
- Transport for NSW.

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## Our vision

*A healthy coast and sea,  
managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community,  
now and into the future.*

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## Our role

*Ensure that policies and programs address priority issues,  
are well-coordinated, efficient, evidence-based  
and result in positive outcomes.*

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## Our principles

1. effective community engagement to identify and prioritise benefits and threats
2. identification of priority actions will be based on threat and risk assessment
3. values will be assigned to enable trade-off decisions between alternative uses of the marine estate
4. best available information will be used in trade-off decisions, but judgement will still be required
5. the wellbeing of future generations will be considered
6. existing access arrangements will be respected
7. the precautionary principle will be applied
8. efficient and cost-effective management to achieve community outcomes
9. management decisions will be transparent and adjust in response to new information
10. management performance will be measured, monitored and reported and information pursued to fill critical knowledge gaps.

# NSW marine estate - at a glance

One of our State's greatest natural assets

## OUR MARINE ESTATE IS VAST



**6**  
marine parks

marine parks help to conserve marine biodiversity, while at the same time providing for activities such as diving, boating, fishing and tourism. Marine parks cover around one-third of the NSW marine estate (approximately 345,000 hectares)



**14**  
artificial reefs

artificial reefs enhance fishing opportunities for recreational fishers by creating additional habitat for fish and other marine organisms. There are 8 offshore reefs and 6 estuarine reefs in NSW.



**11**  
coastal  
Aboriginal nations

Sea Country is vital to Aboriginal cultural wellbeing, supporting spiritual and cultural connection to Country as well as sustenance via locally caught seafood



**12**  
aquatic reserves

aquatic reserves are places to enjoy a range of marine activities such as boating, scuba diving, snorkelling and swimming. These reserves cover around 2,000 hectares of the NSW marine estate



**185**  
rivers, estuaries  
& coastal lakes

185 rivers, estuaries and coastal lakes in the NSW marine estate



**826**  
beaches

826 beaches, which includes 755 ocean beaches along the NSW coastline



**6,500** km  
estuarine & coastal  
lake foreshores &  
coastline

including 1,750 km of ocean coastline



**1,000,000**  
hectares of estuary  
and ocean

the NSW marine estate incorporates estuaries and coastal foreshores, and extends seaward out to 3 nautical miles between the Queensland to the Victorian border

# NSW marine estate map



# Our key programs and projects

Following is a summary of key marine estate programs being delivered as part of the marine reforms initiated by the findings of the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW in 2012.

## Marine Estate Management Strategy

The 10-year Strategy (2018-2028) is the first whole-of-government approach to providing an overarching framework for coordinated management of the marine estate to deliver its vision for *'a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and into the future'*.

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The Strategy is the centrepiece of the NSW Government's response to the need to establish a coordinated, holistic, quadruple bottom-line approach to the management of the NSW marine estate.

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It includes 53 actions across nine interlinked initiatives that aim to reduce the priority threats by reducing pollution and protecting coastal habitats, planning for climate change, protecting Aboriginal cultural values of the marine estate, reducing impacts on marine wildlife, delivering sustainable fishing and boating, enhancing social, cultural and economic benefits and delivering effective governance, while ensuring continued access and enjoyment for the community who rely on it for work, recreation, health and wellbeing. Water pollution, which was identified as the greatest threat to the marine estate by the NSW community and through an evidence-based [statewide Threat and Risk Assessment](#) (statewide TARA), is allocated the greatest share of funding and resources. In 2020-2021, the third year of the Strategy, the NSW Government committed an additional investment of \$28.3 million to support the continued delivery of the Strategy.

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The NSW Government has invested a total of \$74 million over the last three years to the Strategy. The funding has been critical to maintain the momentum of projects, continue partnerships, providing regional jobs and helping with the recovery of bushfire and flood affected regions.

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Detailed progress on the delivery and evaluation of Strategy for the year is reported separately in the [Strategy Implementation Annual Report 2020-2021](#). It provides an overview of the progress of the Strategy with a focus on achievements during the year. There were more than 100 projects across nine initiatives, with many benefits being realised for the environment, marine habitats and wildlife, stakeholders and the community.

Good governance and collaboration underpin the implementation of the Strategy. Over the last year the Authority has seen staff from each of the Authority's affiliated agencies work together cohesively and expanded this to other partner agencies, industry and key stakeholder groups.

## \$28 million to ramp up boating facilities

New and upgraded boating infrastructure will be delivered across the State under the NSW Government's Boating Now Program.

In July 2020, the NSW Government, announced 69 successful projects that have secured grant funding under the NSW Government's \$28 million Boating Now Program to improve boating access and safety. The

NSW Boating Now Program aims to provide better access to NSW waterways for local and visiting boaters so they can enjoy their time on the water with safety and ease.

The NSW Boating Now Program is part of Initiative 7 of the Marine Estate Management Strategy which is reducing threats and enabling safe and sustainable boating. For more information on the program and successful projects go to [NSW Boating Now](#).

## \$205 million maritime infrastructure funding

A \$205 million investment in maritime infrastructure and safety upgrade projects will create nearly 1300 jobs across the state.

In October 2020, the NSW Government announced a [\\$205 million Maritime Infrastructure Stimulus Program](#) to stimulate the NSW economy while generating long-term benefits by:

- activating maritime and foreshore precincts
- attracting more visitors and private investment in these areas.

Projects being funded under the program include upgrades to regional harbours, breakwaters, wharves, jetties and vessel maintenance facilities, plus priority dredging works and major maritime property upgrades in Sydney Harbour and Botany Bay.

The Maritime Infrastructure Project is also part of Initiative 7 of the Marine Estate Management Strategy. The majority of infrastructure funding works are linked to actions under the [NSW Boating Now](#) program.

## Marine Estate Management Act review completed

The *Marine Estate Management Act 2014* (the Act) commenced in 2014 to provide for strategic and integrated management of the whole NSW marine estate, including the marine waters, coasts, estuaries, marine parks and aquatic reserves. A statutory five-year review of the Act concluded in December 2020. The scope of the review was to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and whether the terms of the Act remain appropriate for securing those objectives.

Targeted consultation was undertaken between July and September 2020 with peak stakeholder groups, advisory committees and State agencies. A variety of comments, relating broadly to the objects and the terms of the Act, were raised in submissions. Stakeholder feedback ranged from being generally satisfied with the existing objects and terms of the Act, to recommending specific changes to the Act. Some comments were out of scope.

The review found that the comments raised could be and, in some cases, are being achieved through policy, regulation or procedure. In other cases, the current settings remain valid to achieve the purpose of the Act. The final report recommended that the Act is working as intended and the objects and terms of the Act do not require change.

The final report was tabled in the NSW Parliament on 17 December 2020 and is available on the [NSW Parliament website](#).

## Marine park management planning

A new approach to managing NSW marine parks commenced in 2018 with pilot work undertaken in the priority Batemans and Port Stephens-Great Lakes marine parks, which then informed further work that encompassed Cape Byron, Solitary Islands and Jervis Bay marine parks in 2020-2021. This has resulted in the development of a draft 10-year management plan for the NSW mainland marine park network which applies to all five mainland marine parks. The draft plan identifies environmental, social, cultural and economic values to be managed across the mainland marine park network and for individual parks, as well as ways to address threats to those values. It also outlines management objectives, actions and programs to conserve values and reduce threats.

The marine park planning reforms are informed by the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in 2012, the ongoing work of the Authority; the creation of an evidence-based [statewide Threat and Risk Assessment](#) finalised in 2017, that informed development of the [Marine Estate Management Strategy](#), and information previously collected from the community through the [Marine Estate Community Survey](#) in 2014. This has been supplemented with additional local information gathered to ensure that local marine park values and threats are understood and addressed. This new approach is a comprehensive way of managing marine parks to deliver the greatest community benefits. The draft plan was considered by the Authority on 10 June 2021 and submitted to the Ministers responsible for the marine estate for approval to undertake statutory public consultation.

This process is being conducted in two stages:

- Stage 1: identifying the values, threats, and management objectives for the mainland marine park network and developing a draft network management plan to meet these objectives (this will include input from the local marine park advisory committees, stakeholders, and the community)
- Stage 2: implementing the new management plan. This will involve the development of any associated regulations required to give effect to the final plan.

When completed, the final network management plan and associated management rules (regulations) will replace existing zoning and operational plans for the five mainland marine parks and will include programs such as education, research, and provision of infrastructure along with spatial management.

A separate management plan will be developed for Lord Howe Island Marine Park.

## Marine Estate Management Rules

In January this year, the Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW, the Hon. Adam Marshall MP wrote to the Authority seeking its advice on the Marine Estate Management (Management Rules) Amendment Regulation 2020.

The NSW Government is implementing a new approach to marine park management planning in two stages. Stage one involves preparation of a draft network management plan for the five mainland marine parks, with statutory community consultation on the draft plan scheduled for late 2021. Stage two involves reviewing marine park management rules to implement aspects of the new management plan, with a priority focus on Port Stephens-Great Lakes and Batemans marine parks. Draft management rules will be prepared with advice from marine park advisory committees and released for a separate period of statutory community consultation.

The Authority considers that stakeholders and the broader community would benefit from considering changes to Batemans draft management rules (concerning sanctuary zones) during stage two of the management planning process. A consolidated set of draft management rules would then be available for consultation, including those rules arising from the management planning process. In this way, the community will have their say on the strategic draft 10-year management plan for the NSW mainland marine park network, including local management objectives and actions for marine parks which will inform the full suite of management rules required to conserve values, manage threats and deliver management objectives.

The Authority notes that the amnesty arrangements for Batemans will remain in place until the management rules are finalised post public consultation.

## Marine Integrated Monitoring Program

Implementation of the [Marine Integrated Monitoring Program](#) (MIMP) continues.

The MIMP facilitates centralised and efficient coordination of monitoring, evaluation, reporting to support the Strategy and integrates environmental, social, cultural and economic elements. The MIMP gives the community confidence that the investment in the Strategy to reduce priority threats is being continually assessed to drive adaptive management.

The independent formative evaluation of the Strategy after the first two years of delivery is underway and is guided by the MIMP's [Monitoring and Evaluation Framework](#). It is expected the evaluation report will be finalised before the end of 2021. The formative evaluation is the first of three formal evaluations that will be undertaken over the life of the Strategy (after 2, 5 and 10 years).

A community wellbeing framework has been developed as part of the MIMP to guide social, cultural and economic monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Consultants have been engaged to assist with research, design and implementation of social surveys to monitor community wellbeing associated with the NSW marine estate. Engagement with coastal residents, visitors, Aboriginal communities and teenagers are major components of these surveys.

Work continues on prioritising and filling key environmental, social, cultural and economic knowledge gaps, in cooperation with our partners.

## Harvest strategies for NSW fisheries

The NSW Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy Guidelines provide the commercial, recreational and aboriginal cultural fishing sectors with greater certainty and transparency in fisheries management decisions, through the development of tailored harvest strategies in direct partnership with commercial, recreational and Aboriginal fishers.

The NSW Government is committed to partnering with the recreational and commercial fishing industries, Aboriginal fishers and the wider community to manage the State's fisheries to provide a more secure and productive operating environment and to work towards better, more adaptive management approaches for our fisheries in the future. For the first time in NSW, commercial, recreational and Aboriginal fishers will participate in developing the harvest strategies, ensuring long-term sustainability and productivity of the shared fisheries resource.

Harvest strategies offer an effective tool to integrate the ecological, social and economic dimensions of fisheries management into a single framework for decision making. Harvest strategies represent a best-practice approach to fisheries management decision making, as demonstrated by their wide use internationally and throughout Australian jurisdictions.

The NSW Government invited comments on the draft [Harvest Strategy Policy Guidelines](#) from December 2020 to January 2021, which has now been completed.

Harvest strategy development is part of Initiative 6 of the Marine Estate Management Strategy to ensure fishing and aquaculture is managed in a way that is consistent with ecologically sustainable use while providing for the health, heritage and social benefits of fishing and seafood consumption. More information is available on the [Department of Primary Industries' website](#).

## Aboriginal Maritime Safety Plan

The NSW Government launched its inaugural [Aboriginal Maritime Safety Plan 2020-22](#).

Developed with the community, for the community, the plan will embrace new partnerships to improve our understanding of the issues and help prevent boating incidents involving Aboriginal people. The plan also aims to increase Aboriginal participation in the maritime economy by supporting opportunities for career pathways.

Aboriginal communities are connected through history and culture to waterways, often using lakes, streams, rivers and the ocean as a transport option to attend school and work. A waterway is also an important place for Aboriginal people to connect with family members, attend funerals and participate in cultural events. In this way, boating safety is linked to cultural, as well as physical and economic, wellbeing.

The Aboriginal Maritime Safety Plan 2020-22 delivers a boating safety strategy for Aboriginal people, which is an action in the [Maritime Safety Plan 2017-2021](#) and supports the vision of Transport for NSW's [Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2021](#). The plan is also a key deliverable under Initiative 7 of the NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy.

Further information is available on the [Aboriginal Maritime Safety](#) website.

## Eat more NSW seafood grants

The NSW Government, in partnership with NSW Seafood Industry Council, launched a \$500,000 grants program in May 2021 to boost the value of the NSW seafood industry.

The Eat More NSW Seafood 2021 grants program is designed to build marketing and promotion capability within seafood businesses through small-scale (less than \$10,000) and large-scale (\$10,000 to \$100,000) grants.

The purpose of the campaign is to increase consumption of NSW seafood, drive the value of NSW seafood through increased awareness and consumption, and build industry capabilities and cohesiveness.

Strategic objectives of the campaign are to:

- promote the sustainability and quality of NSW seafood
- promote the health benefits of seafood consumption
- increase consumer purchasing options across a broader range of seafood products
- educate consumers and the community about the importance of sustainable fishing and aquaculture, and how they can help achieve this through their seafood purchasing choices
- increase awareness of the economic contribution made by NSW seafood production to local and regional communities
- build support for NSW commercial fishing and aquaculture.

Applications for the Eat More NSW Seafood 2021 grants program closed on 30 June 2021.

The Eat More NSW Seafood 2021 grants program is funded under Initiative 6 of the Marine Estate Management Strategy.

Further information is available on the [NSW Department of Primary Industries' website](#).

## Horticulture grants to keep nutrients on-farm

The NSW Government announced a horticulture grants program in November 2020 for the horticulture industry on the State's North Coast to make operations more productive, profitable and environmentally sustainable.

Grants of up to \$10,000 were offered to fund on-farm infrastructure to assist in implementing on-ground works to keep sediment and nutrients on farm and out of our coastal waterways.

Expressions of Interest for the grants closed on 21 December 2020.

The NSW Government will work with farmers who have an interest in implementing best management practices, such as improving irrigation outcomes and reducing sediment run off.

The grants were distributed through the Clean Coastal Catchments project which is funded under Initiative 1 of the Marine Estate Management Strategy, to improve water quality and reduce marine litter for the benefit of marine habitats, wildlife and the community.

Further information is available on the [NSW Department of Primary Industries' website](#).

## Strategy Implementation Plan

The Authority updated the Marine Estate Management Strategy [Implementation Plan 2020-2021](#) in consultation with key partners. The Implementation Plan details how and where the Authority delivers on the actions within the [Marine Estate Management Strategy](#), timeframes and partnerships to achieve outcomes. A key focus of the plan is to coordinate functions and responsibilities within and across government, including local government, as well as partnerships with industry and the community.

Key performance indicators that track progress in achieving Strategy outcomes are included in the MIMP. The Authority will report and communicate its progress and achievements regularly on the [marine estate web site](#), as well as in the Authority's annual report on Strategy implementation.

## Statewide Threat and Risk Assessment

The [statewide Threat and Risk Assessment 2017](#), (statewide TARA) continues to support and underpin key pieces of work undertaken by the Authority during 2020-2021. The statewide TARA has enabled the Authority to focus management on reducing the most important threats and associated risks in NSW to maximise the environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits we derive from the marine estate.

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This evidence-based assessment sets a new national benchmark  
by identifying and prioritising threats and risk to the environmental assets  
as well as to social, cultural and economic benefits  
derived from the marine estate.

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The purpose of the statewide TARA, as set out in the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014* is to:

- identify threats to the environmental, economic and social values (benefits) of the marine estate
- assess the risks associated with those identified threats
- inform marine estate management decisions by prioritising threats and risks according to the level of impact on the values derived from the marine estate.

A review of the TARA will commence in 2022 to review progress in filling key knowledge gaps, identify new and emerging threats and review priority threats. Scoping work is underway to develop an approach for the review.

## A voice for local communities

Marine park advisory committees provide a voice for local communities in the management of local marine parks. Marine park advisory committees will also play a key role during the development of new [marine park management plans](#).

Each marine park advisory committee includes members with skills, expertise and knowledge in one or more of the following areas to ensure the wide range of community values can be considered:

- Aboriginal culture
- commercial fishing
- local government
- marine conservation
- marine science
- maritime industry
- recreational boating
- recreational fishing
- recreational water use
- tourism.

The NSW Government's marine estate reforms are committed to revitalising local marine park advisory committees to give local communities a better say in decision-making and to improve consideration of social, cultural and economic values. The committees are not decision-making bodies but provide important local advice to the NSW Government on marine park management, including local values, threats, issues and opportunities.

The six marine park advisory committees meet regularly. Membership of the committees and minutes of meetings are available on the [marine estate website](#).

More details on the role, establishment, membership, process for appointment and operational procedures of the advisory committees is set out in the [Marine Park Advisory Committee Handbook](#).

## Links to coastal management

The Authority supports related NSW Government reform processes. It integrates processes and outputs where relevant to meet the NSW Government's directive to set an overarching framework that will coordinate the management of the marine estate now and into the future.

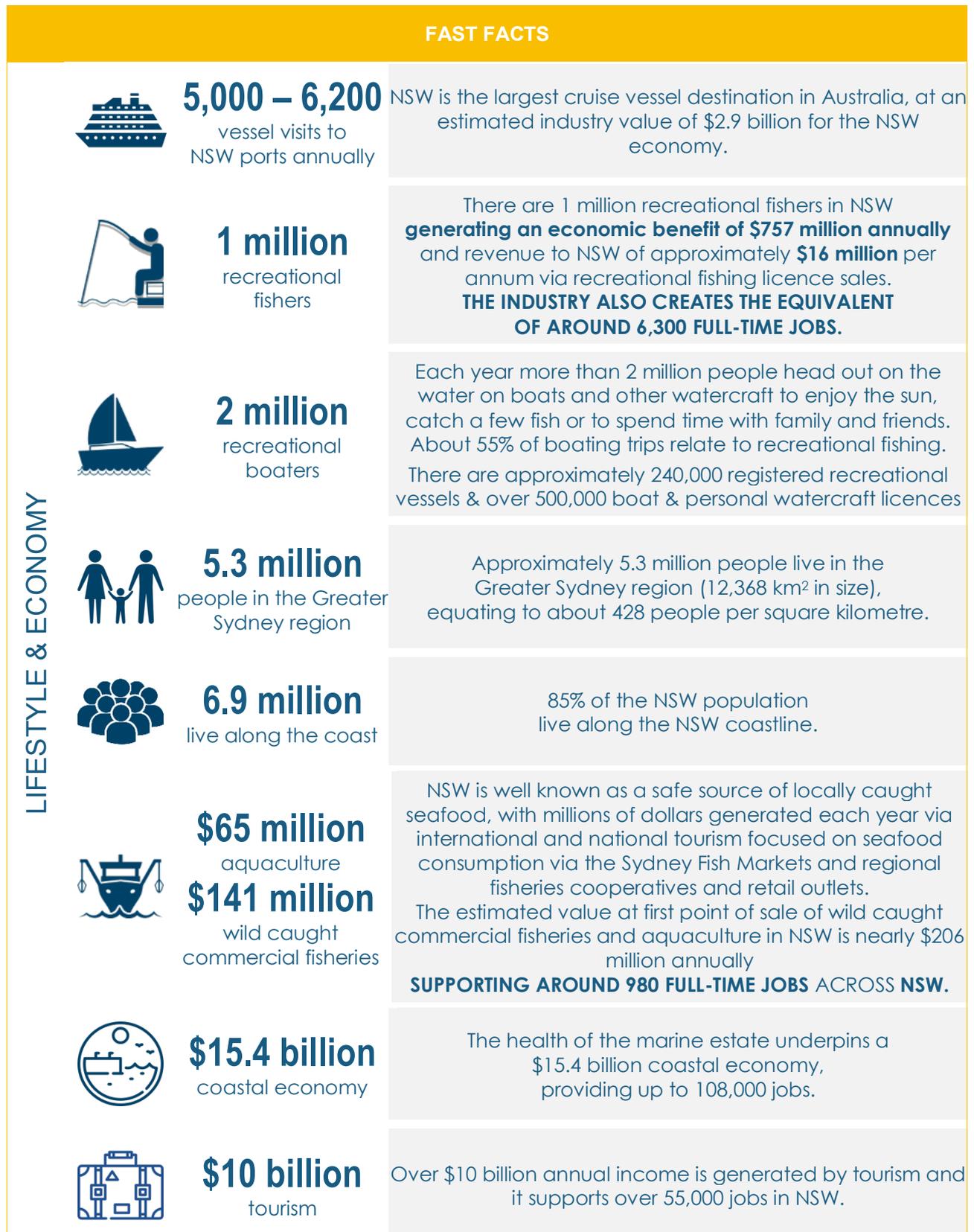
Ongoing links have been established between the Authority and the NSW Coastal Council, with Dr Kate Brooks, member of the Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel who is also member on the NSW Coastal Council.

During the year the Authority worked with the NSW Coastal Council and marine estate agencies to support improved integration of the Strategy and local government led Coastal Management Programs.

In 2020 the Authority provided funding to the Sydney Coastal Council Group from the Marine Estate Management Strategy, to produce a [video](#) supporting the Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program increase awareness of the importance of catchment influences on urban water quality and links with the Strategy. The video has made the shortlist for the International Sustainability Award in London in 2021.

## Fast facts

The NSW marine estate is integral to the State's coastal-based lifestyle and economy



## Schedule of works

The Authority's Schedule of Works identifies priority areas of work as part of the strategic, holistic, evidence-based approach to managing the NSW marine estate – marine waters, coast and estuaries, including marine parks.

In forming advice for the Ministers responsible for the marine estate, the Authority has direct access to independent expertise across economic, social and ecological sciences through the Knowledge Panel. The Authority and the Knowledge Panel are helping the NSW Government to focus their programs on priority issues and will oversee implementation of appropriate, innovative, cost-effective management responses to the biggest threats and risks to the NSW marine estate, and to monitor progress and outcomes.

The schedule is updated periodically as the marine estate reform program progresses and is publicly available on the marine estate website at [www.marine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marine.nsw.gov.au).

Indicative completion	Priority programs	Status
2021	Marine park advisory committees – vacant positions filled	In progress
2021	Marine park management planning – develop a Network Management Plan (NMP) for five mainland marine parks	In progress
2021	Marine Integrated Monitoring Program – finalise framework documents to guide monitoring and fill knowledge gaps (Community Wellbeing Framework and Environmental Condition Framework)	In progress
2022	Marine park management planning – development of management rules to implement the final NMP	Pending finalisation of Network Management Plan
2023	Marine park network management planning – develop a management plan for Lord Howe Island marine park	Pending finalisation of NMP
2022	Statewide Threat and Risk Assessment – five-year review	In progress – agency consultation commenced
2024	Marine Estate Management Strategy implementation – five-year health check	In progress – planning scope of health check
2028	Marine Estate Management Strategy (2018-2028) implementation	Ten-year strategy being implemented
2028	Marine Integrated Monitoring Program (MIMP) implementation	Being implemented

## Our achievements since establishment

Completed projects	Status
<a href="#">Aboriginal Maritime Safety Plan</a>	Published 2021
Marine Estate Management Strategy - <a href="#">Implementation Plan</a> 2020-2021	Published March 2021
<i>Marine Estate Management Act 2014</i> – <a href="#">five-year statutory review</a>	Completed 2020 (tabled Parliament 17 December)
Marine Integrated Monitoring Program <a href="#">Evaluation Framework</a>	Published December 2019
Marine Estate Management Strategy - <a href="#">Implementation Plan</a> 2018-2020	Published October 2019
<a href="#">Maritime Infrastructure Plan</a> 2019-2024	Released December 2018
<a href="#">Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion assessment</a> - explore mechanisms to enhance conservation of marine biodiversity in the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion (Newcastle - Sydney - Wollongong)	Discussion paper released August-September 2018
<a href="#">Marine Estate Management Strategy</a> (2018-2028)	Published 16 Aug 2018
<i>Marine Estate Management (Management Rules) Regulation 1999</i> amended to implement final decision regarding <a href="#">10 ocean beach and headland sanctuary zones</a> sites in four marine parks in relation to shore-based recreational line fishing	Gazetted June 2018
<a href="#">Guidelines for assessing management options for the NSW marine estate</a>	Published October 2017
<a href="#">NSW Marine Protected Areas Policy Statement</a>	Published October 2017
<a href="#">Marine Estate Management Regulation</a>	Remade September 2017
<a href="#">Statewide Threat and Risk Assessment</a>	Published October 2017
Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel evaluation of processes and role in NSW marine estate management	Published 2016 in <a href="#">MEMA's annual report</a>
<a href="#">Threat and risk assessment framework</a>	Published June 2015
<a href="#">Marine Estate Management Act 2014</a>	Commenced December 2014
Social research, through a <a href="#">statewide survey</a> to capture NSW community views on the marine estate	Published July 2014
The <a href="#">Authority's vision and principles</a> determined, to guide management of the marine estate	Published November 2013
Moratorium provisions in <i>Marine Parks Act 1997</i> amended to allow for <a href="#">changes to zoning</a> including alteration of sanctuary zones	Passed Parliament August 2013

# Engagement and communications

Maximising our connection and strengthening our collaboration and networks with communities, stakeholders and people.

Being open and transparent is important to the Authority and the Knowledge Panel. All key marine estate documents and information, including summary meeting minutes advice of the Authority are made available on the marine estate website at [www.marine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marine.nsw.gov.au).

The *Marine Estate Community and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* details the approach the Authority and the Knowledge Panel take towards stakeholder engagement, Aboriginal and community participation and communication activities.

Figure 1. The engagement strategy outlines seven overarching principles for engagement and recognises that consultation, comprises a number of steps with a range of different engagement techniques.

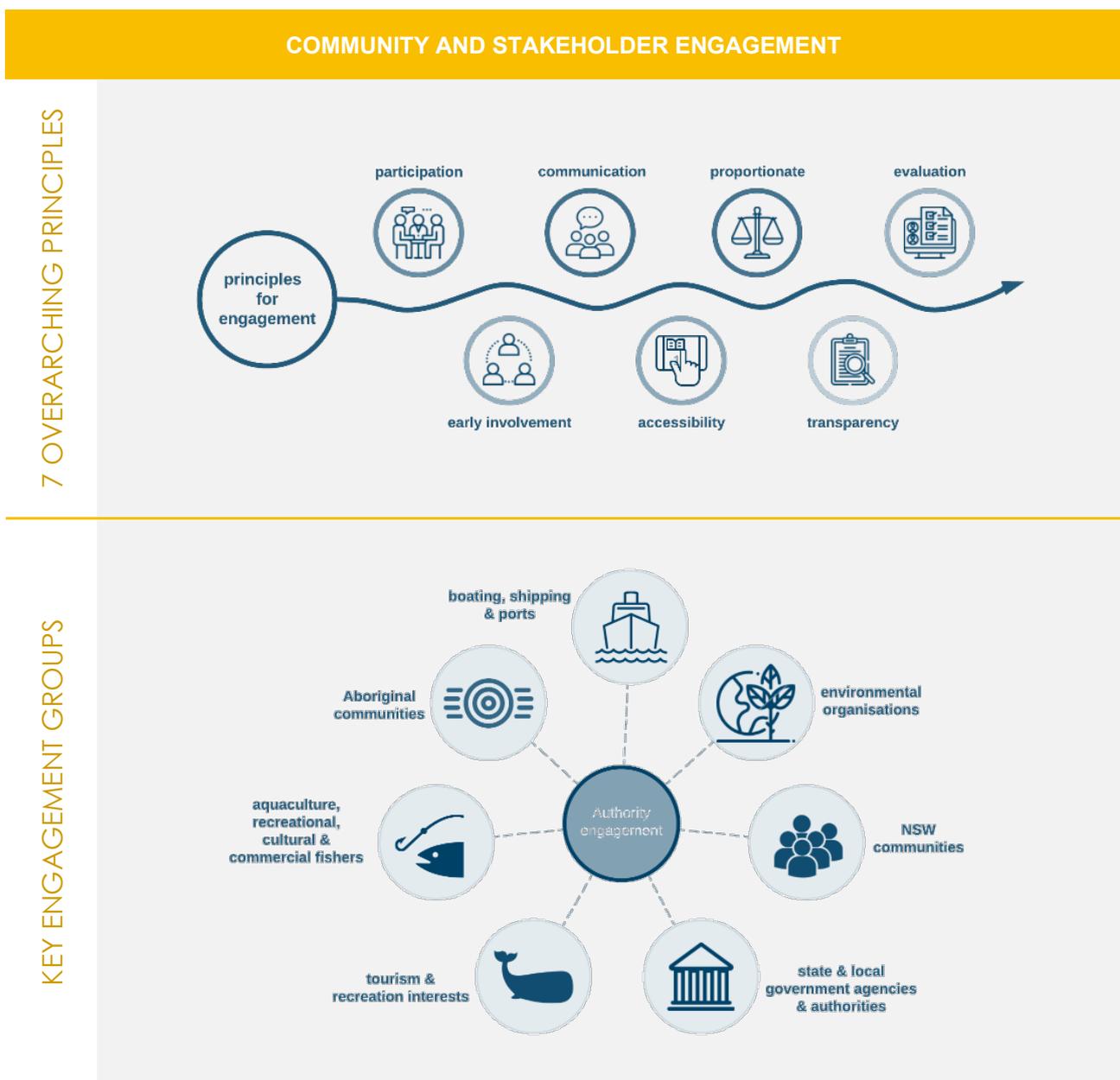
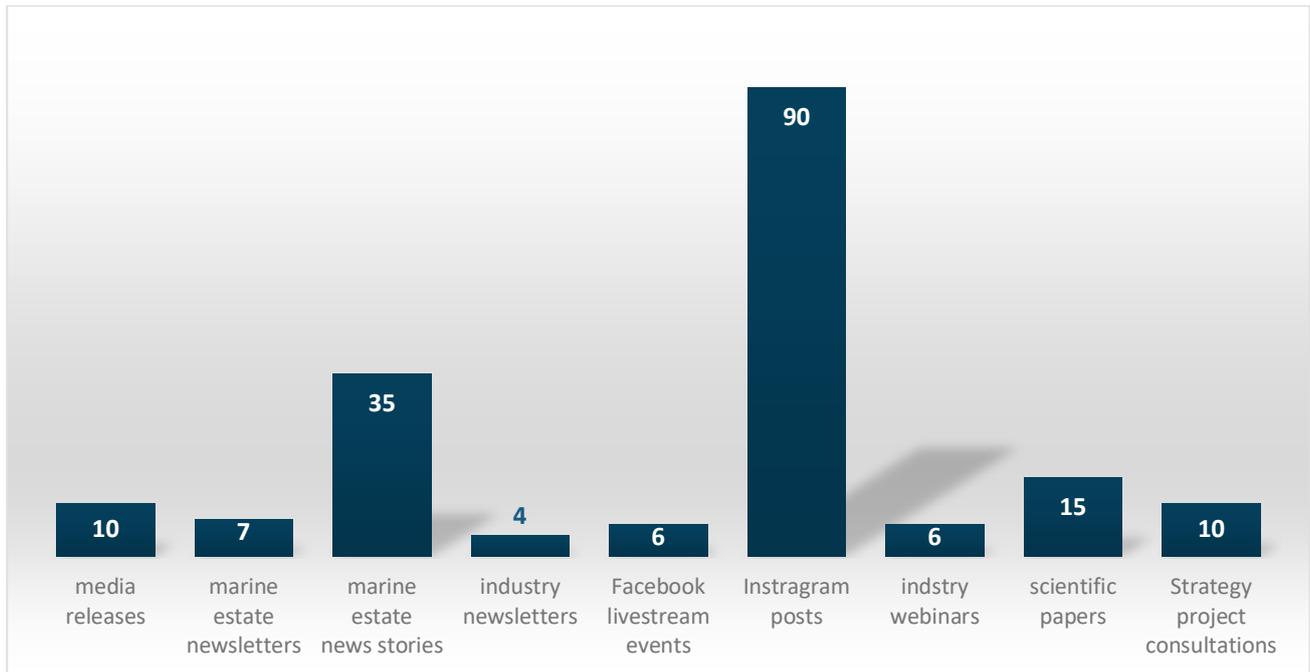


Figure 2. Summary of communications in 2020–21



## Have your say

Community and stakeholders can subscribe to the Authority's online newsletter to receive news about marine estate projects or can email the Authority directly. Further information is available on the marine estate website [www.marine.nsw.gov.au/connect-with-us](http://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/connect-with-us).

STAY INFORMED		CONNECT WITH US	
HAVE YOUR SAY			
	<p>STAY INFORMED AND UP TO DATE ON ALL THINGS MARINE ESTATE</p> <p><a href="#">subscribe to the Authority's newsletter</a></p>		<p>EMAIL THE AUTHORITY</p> <p><a href="mailto:contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au">contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au</a></p>

## Stakeholder engagement

Engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders and the community was undertaken on marine estate reforms during the year. Targeted, multifaceted engagement was undertaken by Authority agencies on numerous projects. This year Authority agencies again focused on improving engagement with local government and strengthening links with the NSW Coastal Council.

The impact of COVID-19 had a significant impact on our stakeholder engagement and our partnerships that are a key part of our work and will continue to influence our engagement in 2021/22. Despite the challenges, staff have adapted and are working towards new approaches to best manage our projects and engagement with stakeholders.

For a full list of communications and engagement with our stakeholders see the Marine Estate Management [Strategy Annual Implementation Report for 2020-2021](#).

Figure 3. Marine estate website visitors



Figure 4. Marine estate website top 10 web pages visited and number page views



## Authority advice

Table 1. Summary of key Authority advice during the year.

Date	From	To	Subject
10/06/21	Authority Chair	Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW and Minister for Energy and Environment	Submission of the draft Management Plan for the NSW Mainland Marine Park Network (2021 – 2031) and associated draft Communications and Engagement Strategy to support the public consultation process (OUT21/7269)
08/04/21	Authority Chair	Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW and Minister for Energy and Environment	Advice on the draft Marine Estate (Management Rules) Amendment Regulation 2020 (OUT21/2865)

Authority advice can be found on the marine estate website under [Authority minutes and advice](#).

# Governance

## Organisational structure

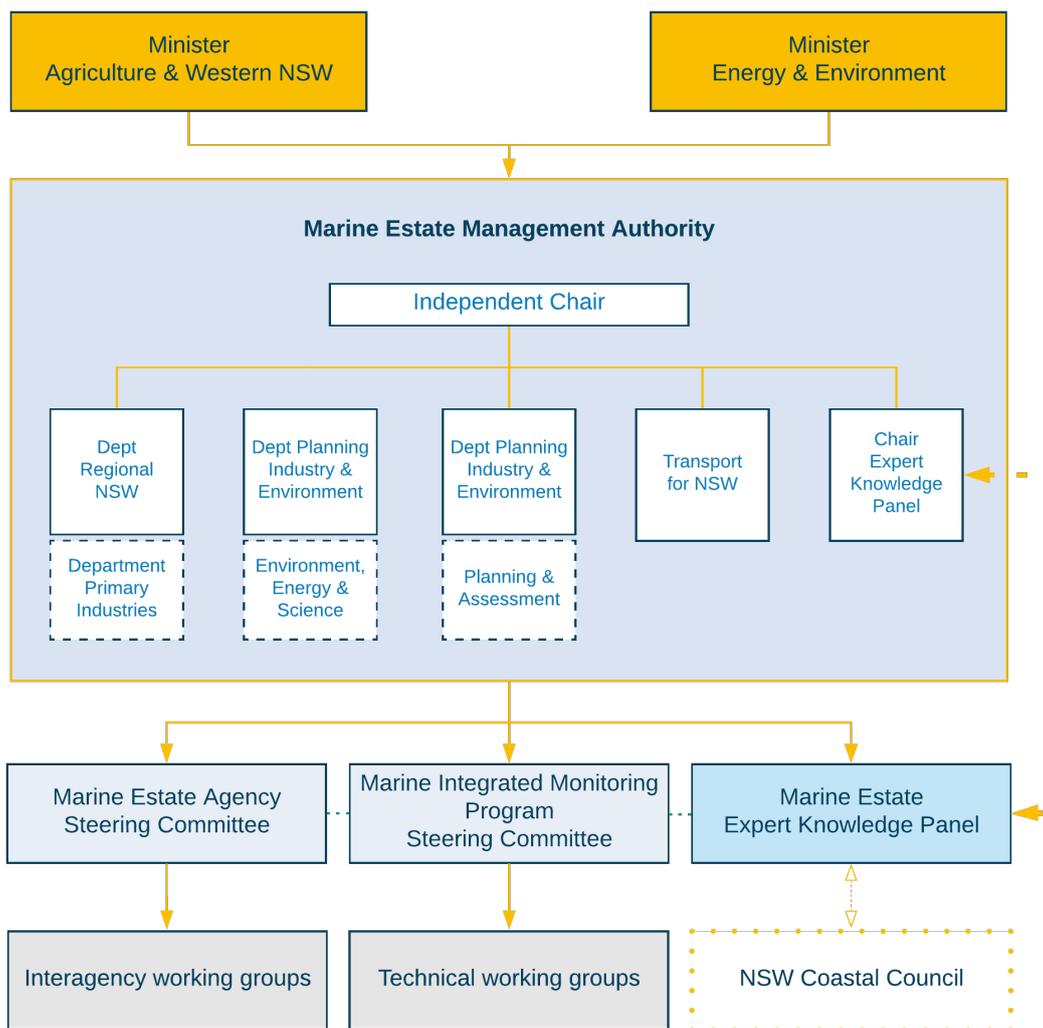
The Authority provides advice to the Ministers jointly responsible for the marine estate.

The Authority brings together the heads of government agencies with key marine responsibilities to provide advice to the NSW Government on strategic, evidence-based management of the marine estate.

The Authority is supported by the independent Knowledge Panel which provides independent expert advice spanning ecological, economic and social sciences, an Agency Steering Committee of senior executives and the Marine Integrated Monitoring Program Steering Committee, who in turn receive technical support from project specific interagency working groups.

The marine estate governance structure fosters interagency collaboration ensuring management is coordinated, transparent and takes account of across the diverse range of agency interests and responsibilities. Improved linkages between NSW Government agencies and the NSW Coastal Council is intended to lead to better outcomes for the community, industry and the environment by ensuring integrated management that focuses on addressing priority threats and opportunities to achieve the vision for the marine estate.

**Figure 5. Marine estate organisational structure**



# Marine Estate Management Authority

## Establishment

The Authority is an advisory body established under section 7 of the [Marine Estate Management Act 2014](#) (Act), which commenced on 19 December 2014.

## Functions

Statutory functions of the Authority under the Act are to:

- advise the relevant Ministers on management of the marine estate in line with the principles of ecologically sustainable management
- undertake assessments of threats and risks to the marine estate
- prepare a draft Marine Estate Management Strategy for submission to Ministers and advise Ministers of its implementation by public authorities
- promote collaboration and coordination between public authorities in the management of the marine estate
- foster consultation with the community in management of the marine estate.

The Authority and Knowledge Panel do not have any statutory decision-making powers or direct regulatory functions.

[Schedule 1 of the Act](#) sets out the constitution and procedures of the Authority.

During the year the Authority and Knowledge Panel operated in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Act, the Department of Premier and Cabinet's [Guidelines for NSW Boards and Committees](#) and the Authority's [Protocol Manual](#). The Protocol Manual covers the operations of both the Authority and the Knowledge Panel.

## Ministers for the marine estate

NSW Ministers jointly responsible for the NSW marine estate matters are:

MINISTERS FOR THE MARINE ESTATE	
 <p>Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW the Hon. Adam Marshall MP</p>	 <p>Treasurer and Minister for Energy and Environment the Hon. Matthew Kean MP</p>

## Funding

The Authority has no annual budget allocation. All costs associated with the establishment and ongoing operations of the Authority and the Knowledge Panel are funded by the Department of Primary Industries and other agencies by agreement.

## Staffing

The Authority does not employ staff but drives reforms by drawing on existing resources of agencies. The Department of Primary Industries provides support to the Authority and the Knowledge Panel through the marine estate secretariat, including administrative support.

## Meetings and attendance

Four Authority meetings were held during report period, with a quorum achieved at all meetings. Meeting summaries are available on the [marine estate website](#).

	MEMBER	ATTENDANCE <sup>±</sup>
MEETINGS 2020/2021	Authority Chair	4/4
	Chair Expert Knowledge Panel	4/4
	Department of Primary Industries	4/4
	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Planning and Assessment	4/4
	Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Environment, Energy and Science	4/4
	Department of Transport	4/4

<sup>±</sup> Number of meetings attended/meetings held

## Membership

The Authority comprises the following members:

	MEMBERS	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	
MARINE ESTATE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY	 <b>Dr Russell Reichelt</b> , B Sci (Phd) FTSE FIMarEST FAICD Chair, Marine Estate Management Authority	▶ 16/09/2019 to 15/09/23	
	 <b>Anthea Tinney</b> , PSM, B Econ, MAICD Chair, Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel	▶ 15/11/18 to 31/08/22	
	Ex-officio member	▶ Secretary, Department of Regional NSW (delegated to deputy member, Director General, Department of Primary Industries)	▶ ongoing
	Ex-officio member	▶ Deputy Secretary, Biodiversity, Conservation and Science, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Environment, Energy and Science	▶ ongoing
	Ex-officio member	▶ Deputy Secretary, State Policies and Strategic Advice, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Planning and Assessment	▶ ongoing
	Ex-officio member	▶ Secretary, Transport for NSW (delegated to Executive Director, Centres for Road Safety & Maritime Safety).	▶ ongoing

## Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel

### Establishment

The Knowledge Panel is an advisory body established under section 9 of the *Marine Estate Management Act 2014*.

The Knowledge Panel is tasked by and reports directly to the Authority. Knowledge Panel effectiveness and performance is monitored by the Authority and is also reported in this annual report.

### Membership

Knowledge Panel comprises a Chair and five members who are appointed for a period up to four years.

MEMBERS			TERM OF APPOINTMENT
KNOWLEDGE PANEL		Anthea Tinney PSM, B Econ, MAICD Chair, Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel	15/11/18 to 31/08/22
		Dr Kate Brooks BA, Dip Mktg, M.Litt (Soc), PhD, FARLP	15/11/18 to 31/08/22
		Mr Peter McGinnity B Sci (Hons) Env Studies	15/11/18 to 31/08/22
		Professor Kate Barclay BA, MA, PhD Social Science	01/05/17 to 31/01/21 (term expired)
		Associate Professor William Glamore B Env Studies, PhD (Environmental / Civil Engineering)	01/05/17 to 31/01/21 (term expired)
		Professor Peter Steinberg B Sci (Hons), PhD Biology (Marine Science)	01/05/17 to 31/01/21 (term expired)

Three Knowledge Panel members terms of appointment expired during 2021. An expression of interest was advertised to fill vacancies. Appointment of new members are yet to be finalised and announced. To supplement the three identified areas of expertise under the *Marine Estate Management Act*, two additional areas of expertise were included in the expression of interest:

- a member with Aboriginal expertise in Sea Country management

- a member with ecological expertise in marine biological science, in addition to the current member position of ecological expertise in natural resource management.

## Meetings and attendance

Four Knowledge Panel meetings were held during the report period.

Significantly, pre-meetings and additional out of session meetings and teleconferences enable the Knowledge Panel to collectively discuss preliminary views relating to agenda items, negotiate a consolidated position and provide an opportunity to identify and discuss strategic and governance issues.

	MEMBER	ATTENDANCE <sup>±</sup>
PANEL MEETINGS 2020/2021	Anthea Tinney (Chair)	4/4
	Dr Kate Brooks	4/4
	Mr Peter McGinnity	3/4
	Professor Kate Barclay	2/2
	Associate Professor William Glamore	2/2
	Professor Peter Steinberg	2/2
	Dr Russell Reichelt (Authority observer)	3/4

<sup>±</sup> Number of meetings attended/meetings held – noting three members terms expired and participated in two meetings for the year.