



OUT21/18423

Minister James Griffin MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage
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Minister Dugald Saunders MP, Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW
office@saunders.minister.nsw.gov.au

Dear Minister Griffin and Minister Saunders

Re: Delivering results under the Marine Estate Management Strategy

I am pleased to provide an update on recent project outputs that were endorsed by the Marine Estate Management Authority at our last meeting held on 9 December 2021.

These projects deliver on the NSW Government's approach for a coordinated, holistic, quadruple bottom-line approach to the management of the NSW marine estate. They are meaningful contributions to the NSW Government's 10-year [Marine Estate Management Strategy](#) (2018–2028), the centrepiece of the NSW marine estate reforms program.

Blue Carbon Prioritisation Report

The report: *A Coastal Wetland Restoration First Pass Prioritisation for Blue Carbon and Co-benefits in NSW* was completed by DPI Fisheries staff in collaboration with internationally acknowledged blue carbon scientists from the University of Wollongong. It prioritises, at a first pass level, blue carbon opportunities within NSW under current management settings. It is Australia's first state-wide assessment and identifies 78 priority blue carbon sites that meet the requirements of the proposed Commonwealth methodology for blue carbon via reintroduction of tidal flows. The report also provides an overview of how this blue carbon method can capture and securely store carbon in a way that also improves fisheries production, foreshore protection, water quality and biodiversity values.

The report is timely as interest in blue carbon within government and amongst stakeholders is building as the Commonwealth Government recently finalised their methodology in January 2022. The developing blue carbon market (see: <http://www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/ERF/About-the-Emissions-Reduction-Fund>) is expected to influence land use management decision making and may provide alternative income stream opportunities for landholders with the very lowest elevation paddocks that are becoming increasingly compromised by sea level rise.

Fish Friendly Breakwater Audit and Maintenance Guidelines

The Fish Friendly Breakwater Maintenance project has involved collaboration across government to develop tools for adopting a more integrated approach to maximise value and minimise unwanted impacts when undertaking future works to maintain and retrofit priority breakwater infrastructure.

The guidelines were developed following an audit of trained river entrances, armoured harbours and groynes and their multi-use and eco-features in NSW. A summary report and three illustrated volumes document the primary purpose of each structure and their multi-use and eco-features. They provide baseline information needed to better manage these structures. By using historical photos

the guidelines are an engaging way of sharing how much some of these areas have changed, and why changes to river entrances was identified as one of the highest threats and risks to environmental values in the marine estate with stakeholders and the broader community.

I am confident that a joint Ministerial release of these reports would be a valuable opportunity to showcase the NSW Government's evidence-based approach to addressing priority threats to the social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits our NSW marine estate, and why the Strategy has received national and international acclaim.

If there are questions about these projects, please contact Mrs Sarah Fairfull, Director Aboriginal Fishing and Marine and Coastal Environments, NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries on mobile: 0419 185 534 or email: sarah.fairfull@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Russell Reichelt AO FTSE
Chair
Marine Estate Management Authority

25 January 2022

Enc.

- A Coastal Wetland Restoration First Pass Prioritisation for Blue Carbon and Co-benefits in NSW (Attachment A)
- Fish Friendly Breakwater Audit - a summary report and three illustrated volumes document the primary purpose of each structure and their multi-use and eco-features (Box.com link: [Attachments B-H](#))
- Draft Ministerial media release (Attachment I)