



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Marine estate reforms – progress update

October 2017

WHAT ARE THE MARINE ESTATE REFORMS?

The marine estate reforms are the [NSW Government's response](#) to the 2012 [Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW](#). The reforms represent a fundamental shift in management of the State's marine and estuarine waters towards a triple bottom line approach. This takes account of economic, social, cultural and environmental values in determining the best outcomes for achieving the vision for the marine estate of *'a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and in the future'*.

In 2014 the NSW Government repealed the [Marine Parks Act 1997](#) and introduced the [Marine Estate Management Act 2014](#) to provide the legislative and governance framework to support the implementation of the reforms. The Act also consolidated marine protected area legislation for marine parks and aquatic reserves under one statute.

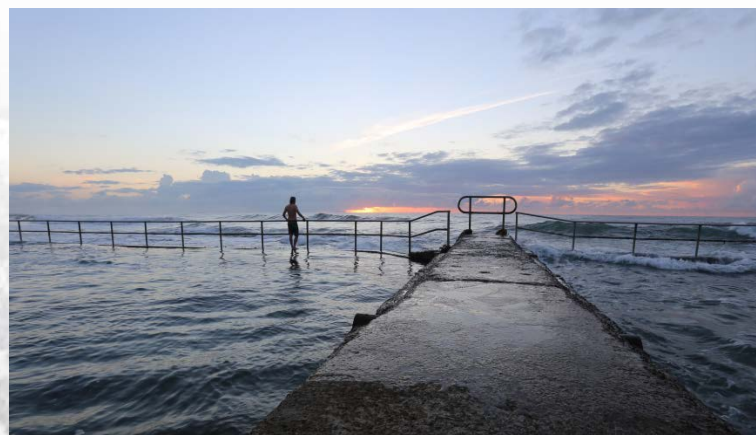
Two advisory bodies were established in 2013:

- The [Marine Estate Management Authority](#) (the Authority) to provide advice to the NSW Government on the priorities for management of the NSW marine estate by key government agencies.
- The independent [Marine Estate Expert Knowledge Panel](#) (the Panel) to provide

expert advice to the Authority on key knowledge needs and support evidence-based decision making.

The Authority's [Schedule of Works](#) identifies priority areas of work to deliver on the marine estate reforms including the development of the 10 year Marine Estate Management Strategy to set the strategic direction, underpinned by a threat and risk assessment. The Marine Estate Management Authority's [Annual Reports](#) highlight progress on reform implementation.

The principles and processes that the Authority follow in providing advice to NSW Government are outlined in [Managing the NSW Marine Estate: Purpose, Underpinning Principles and Priority Setting \(MEMA 2015\)](#). This includes 10 underpinning principles for managing the marine estate alongside a 5-step decision making process.



WHY IS GOVERNMENT RE-SETTING THE PRIORITIES FOR DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAMES FOR THE MARINE ESTATE REFORMS?

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 new agenda takes into account other 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 and coastal reforms.

The Marine Estate Management Authority has been directed to bring forward the finalisation of the first draft 10-year statewide Marine Estate Management Strategy and to undertake community engagement on the [draft Strategy](#).

The Strategy will incorporate a number of management initiatives identified during the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion Assessment in 2016, such as addressing water quality, litter and marine debris and research priorities. It has also incorporated broader statewide issues such as climate change and improving governance arrangements for the marine estate. The strategy will also be used to inform:

- spatial management assessments for the [Hawkesbury Shelf marine and Twofold Shelf marine bioregions](#)
- new management planning processes for existing marine parks.

WHEN WILL THE FINAL MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES FOR THE HAWKESBURY SHELF MARINE BIOREGION BE RELEASED?

Feedback received from the NSW community on the eight proposed management initiatives in the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion have been considered as part of the Marine Estate Management Strategy. Many of the proposed initiatives considered for the bioregion also address threats that have been identified as statewide priorities for the NSW marine estate. These include initiatives to address water

quality, restoration of aquatic habitats, litter and marine debris, research priorities, wildlife interactions, improving boating infrastructure and land use planning outcomes. These broader initiatives have been integrated into the [draft Strategy](#) which has now been released for public consultation. The final Strategy is due for release in early 2018.

A [summary report](#) detailing the community feedback on the suggested management initiatives for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion is now available on the marine estate website.

Several initiatives that address bioregion-specific priorities are progressing this year. These include 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.

WILL THERE BE A NEW MARINE PARK IN THE HAWKESBURY SHELF MARINE BIOREGION?

The Authority has released the [Marine Protected Areas Policy Statement](#), which outlines the role and purpose of marine protected areas in managing the marine estate.

The policy statement, along with the final statewide threat and risk assessment and Strategy, will be used to inform the NSW Government's final decision on any possible spatial management options for the Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion. This will be undertaken separately from the Strategy and involve extensive consultation.



WILL SPATIAL MANAGEMENT RESULT IN LOSS OF EXISTING ACCESS RIGHTS FOR COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHING AND BOATING IN THE BIOREGION?

Spatial management in the Hawkesbury shelf marine bioregion is being considered by the Authority as a possible management response to address priority threats and risks to environmental, social, cultural and economic community benefits. The use of spatial management will be based on an evaluation against other possible options to determine the most effective response to reduce priority risk(s) and cost effectiveness in terms of maximising community benefits and reducing threats.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

Further details on the [marine estate reforms](#) and key initiatives can be found on the [marine estate website](#).

If you would like to receive updates on the marine estate reforms please advise us via contact.us@marine.nsw.gov.au and provide your name, email address and postcode.



© State of New South Wales through Department of Industry, October 2017. You may copy, distribute and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute the NSW Marine Estate Management Authority as the owner.

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 the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the author or the user's independent advisor.

Published by the Department of Primary Industries. Images: DPI/Joe Neilson, Andrew Reed, Hamish Malcolm.
INT17/161442