



SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP INC.

councils **caring for the coastal environment**

SURVEY RESPONSE

Commonwealth Marine Reserves Review

March 2015

This document presents a copy of our responses to the Commonwealth Marine Reserves Review Online Survey.

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SCCG Responses to Online Survey on Commonwealth Marine Reserves Review

Question 1a.

Which Commonwealth marine reserve(s) are you interested in? You can choose multiple reserves, all of the reserves or entire networks.

Entire network.

Question 1b.

For each reserve or network that you are interested in, do you support the existing zoning? What are the main issues you would like to see addressed? (Please provide an answer for each of the reserves/networks you are interested in)

Yes,

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group believes that there is a now a great opportunity to develop an intergovernmental National Marine Strategy linking directly to the Commonwealth marine reserves review. This strategy would aim to build on fundamentals of the 1998 Australia's Oceans Policy developing a national framework working collaboratively with all States, territory and Local Governments to coordinate management and conservations efforts for all of Australia's marine assets and values.

The National Marine Management Strategy would seek to:

- Implement national consistent arrangements for the planning and management of the national marine estate (including State waters)
- Identify and protect natural and ecosystem values
- Ensure sustainable recreational use, tourism and visitor management
- Use and extraction of marine resources consistent with the principles of Ecological Sustainable Development
- Understand and mitigate the impact of terrestrial land uses and climate change on the marine environment; and
- Establish and enhance nationally important marine research and monitoring to ensure comprehensive national coverage addressing marine:
 - Biological diversity
 - Processes and understandings
 - Uses and impacts
 - Tourism
 - International policies, agreement, treaties and obligations
 - Community participation and education and
 - Protecting key national interests including defence, surveillance and enforcement

Question 1c*.

What do you think is important about marine reserves?

Please indicate how important each of the following are to you:

What's important to you?	Not important	Minor importance	Neutral	Important	Very important	Unsure
Continued access for Indigenous cultural activities, including fishing				X		
Acting as reference areas for research purposes					X	
To compliment other off-reserve management of the marine environment					X	
Maintaining the health of oceans and marine ecosystems					X	
Mitigating the impacts of climate change					X	
Protection/preservation of marine biodiversity					X	
Use by future generations					X	
Zoning based on good science					X	
Zoning based on sound socioeconomic factors				X		
They are monitored to ensure effectively achieving their objectives					X	
Other (please specify)						

Question 2a.

What do you think are the major issues impacting biodiversity in Commonwealth marine reserves? You can select as many issues as you like.

Climate change, coastal development, commercial fishing, mining operations (including exploration), pollution, port development.

Question 2b.

Of the above, which three do you see as the most critical issues? Please rank (from 1 to 3) the 3 most critical issues

- 1: Climate change (most critical)
- 2: Pollution
- 3: Coastal development

Ongoing Management

Question 3.

Which management activities do you think should be the highest priority for the Government within Commonwealth marine reserves? Please rank three in order from highest to lowest priority.

- 1: Well developed and resourced scientific monitoring to support ongoing management (highest priority)
- 2: Monitoring the effectiveness of reserve management to continually improve
- 3: Raising community awareness about the marine reserves and their management

Question 4.

How do you think the Commonwealth marine reserves will affect you (positively or negatively)? Please provide a brief explanation.

The Australian marine environment is recognised for its outstanding natural beauty, unique and diverse marine biota and valuable resources. Sustainable marine management is critical to restore, protect and enhance these unique environments. The Commonwealth marine reserves system when integrated with State and Local government reserve programs will affect the Sydney Coastal Councils Group and the community its member councils represent (1.4 Million Sydney sides) in a very positive way. Improving integrated management across jurisdictions will help ensure a comprehensive reserve system that leads to great policy and management assimilation while streamlining management, monitoring and enforcement processes. Having greater coordination across jurisdictions will also hopefully lead to more effective, national consistent while regionally specific community and stakeholder education and engagement activities across the country.