

SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP Inc.  
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ABN: 39 638 876 538



Wednesday, 27 January 2021

Reference: 001-21 SJ

The Hon. Matt Kean, MP;  
The Hon. Adam Marshall, MP;  
The Hon. Andrew Constance, MP

GPO Box 5341  
Sydney NSW 2001

CC. Mr James Griffin, MP

**Re: Sydney Marine Park Proposal Update**

Dear Ministers,

I write to you seeking an update on the NSW Government's proposal for a Sydney marine park. The Marine Estate Management Authority's (MEMA) web-site advises that submissions "*will inform the final marine park proposal to be considered by the NSW Government later in 2018*".<sup>1</sup>

As you are aware, the Sydney Coastal Councils Group (SCCG) strongly supported the proposal and identified several [recommendations](#) to further enhance marine biodiversity and the social and economic benefits the community derives from the marine estate along with reducing priority threats. The SCCG is also seeking a response to our correspondence to Minister Kean on 11 August 2020, seeking clarity on the Sydney marine park proposal following discussions between Minister Marshall and the Marine Estate Management Authority (MEMA) - letter at Attachment A.

Of particular concern is the potential for changes to be made to the scope of the proposal (as indicated at a meeting between MEMA and SCCG in 2020) whereby spatial restrictions that prohibit fishing would now not be included. The SCCG does not support prioritising opportunities for recreational fishing over the environmental, social and economic benefits that can be significantly gained by enhancing marine biodiversity. This approach also goes against the NSW Government's commitment to "*enhancing the protection of biodiversity in the gaps identified in the 2012 NSW Independent Scientific Audit of marine Parks in NSW*".<sup>2</sup> The Audit identified the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Bioregion as a gap.

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<sup>1</sup> NSW Government, 'Hawkesbury Shelf marine bioregion assessment'  
<<https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/marine-estate-programs/hawkesbury-shelf-marine-assessment>>

<sup>2</sup> MEMA (2017) *Marine Protected Areas – within the NSW Marine Estate – Their Role and Purpose*

**As requested in our letter, the SCCG is seeking the NSW Government to clarify its proposal given the length of time since the original proposal was placed on public exhibition (September 2018). This will enable us to update our member Councils and determine whether they would like to make changes to any of their 2018 recommendations for individual sites located in their local government area. We would also like to know the outcomes of the public consultation following the release of the 2018 proposal to assist our Councils in this process.**

It is our belief that the advice on this matter is timely due to the development of:

- The [Greater Sydney Harbour Coastal Management Program](#) which seeks to improve waterway health by reducing priority threats such as stormwater discharge, marine litter, and climate change impacts. The success of the CMP would be greatly complemented by spatial management that enhances marine biodiversity.
- The [Greater Sydney Harbour Litter Prevention Strategy](#) being developed by the Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) and SCCG and seeks to reduce marine litter entering Sydney Harbour by 50% by 2025. As marine litter has a detrimental impact upon marine biodiversity, the reduction of marine litter will greatly complement the establishment and maintenance of a Sydney marine park.
- The new iteration of the [NSW Maritime Safety Plan 2017-2021](#) which seeks to reduce trauma on our waterways across NSW. The [NSW Government's 2016 and 2018 Discussion Papers](#) identified spatial management for biodiversity conservation and use-sharing as having potential to enhance biodiversity outcomes and reduce resource-use conflict (e.g. between swimmers and boaters). A 'special use zone' was proposed in the 2018 proposal to address this particular threat.

If you would like to discuss any of the matters raised in this letter, please contact Sarah Joyce, Executive Officer, on 0407733075 or by email at [executiveofficer@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au](mailto:executiveofficer@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au)

Yours sincerely,



Cr. Lindsay Shurey  
**Chair, SCCG**