



Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW

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Media Release

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NSW Marine Parks Audit Report Released

The Audit Panel is pleased to announce the report of the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in New South Wales was released today. The report has been released by the Ministers responsible – Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson and Minister for the Environment, Robyn Parker.

In seeing the report released the Chair of the Panel, Associate Professor Bob Beeton, drew the attention of interested parties to the Audit terms of reference, available at <http://www.marineparksaudit.nsw.gov.au/about/audit-terms-of-reference/> and the Audit report itself, available at <http://www.marineparksaudit.nsw.gov.au/audit-report/>.

The two principal recommendations of the Panel are

1. That the governance of the NSW Marine Estate be reorganised by bringing the entire estate under one legislative and administrative structure that is closely aligned with the five catchment management authorities covering the NSW coastal drainage systems. This will require the creation of a new entity, the Coastal and Marine Management Authority, incorporating the NSW Marine Parks Authority, NSW Coastal Panel, NSW Fisheries and any other relevant bodies.
2. That science for the NSW Marine Estate be reorganised under an independent Scientific Committee. The Audit Panel makes recommendations about the organisational approach that this Committee should take and suggests a number of research priorities. In particular, these priorities call for greater emphasis on research in the social and economic sciences and the application of these findings to management.

Other recommendations of the Panel deal with specific issues associated with the principal recommendations and terms of reference. They cover:

- the degree to which New South Wales is in compliance with international obligations
- the adequacy of research conducted for the management of marine parks
- issues associated with zoning and how they could be resolved
- the need for significant improvements in social and economic research, and integration of this research into management of marine parks and the marine estate in general
- better management of threats to marine biodiversity especially through improved relationships between catchment management authorities and bodies responsible for the management of the marine estate

- better identification of local indigenous land and sea knowledge and incorporation of this into management.

The full report, along with Audit material including all submissions, workshop summaries and Audit documentation, is available at <http://www.marineparksaudit.nsw.gov.au/> .

Associate Professor Beeton is available for interview.

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