

Marine & Coastal

The Greens (WA) believe that:

- there is an urgent need for ecologically sustainable management of Western Australia's waters because our marine environment is under increased pressure from human activities, particularly the impacts of climate change
- many coral reefs, bays, mangroves, estuaries and islands are of outstanding ecological importance and should be protected in a comprehensive, adequate and representative marine reserve system
- managed public access to our oceans, coasts and riverfronts is important to all Western Australians
- these areas need protection from developments that exclude public access and damage natural values
- sea level rise, ocean warming, acidification, and increased severity and frequency of storms as a result of climate change pose grave threats to marine and coastal ecosystems
- the planning, development and management of the coastal zone should take into account the current and projected impact of climate change and sea level rise based on the most up to date climate science
- planning decisions should take account of the effect of the changing coastal environment on built infrastructure and the impact of built infrastructure on the coastal environment
- rigorous licence conditions should apply to prevent pollution of the marine and coastal environments
- the precautionary principle¹ is essential to safeguard fragile marine and riverfront environments

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- a comprehensive, adequate and representative marine reserve system
- to protect public access that will not damage the environment
- to protect beach amenity and public access to beaches
- only non-lethal shark hazard mitigation measures
- public ownership of the coastline, the estuaries and offshore islands of Western Australia
- strict licence conditions to apply to all projects having a potential to pollute our marine and coastal environment with strict enforcement of those licence conditions by the Department of Environment
- to make planning, development and management decisions that will ensure sustainability of the marine environment and in particular that will protect:
 - vulnerable parts of the marine environment and its associated ecosystems, ecological processes and biological diversity
 - the integrity of landforms
 - recreation, tourism and commercial activities that are consistent with sustainability

- marine values and a sense of place
- to ensure that the State's planning systems and strategies are based on up-to-date climate science and projections (see also The Greens (WA) [Sustainable Settlements](#) policy)
- to ensure that the highest standards of environmentally sensitive design are applied in engineering and infrastructure works in the marine environment
- the precautionary principle¹ to be applied to all planning, development and management decisions in relation to the marine environment
- to involve Aboriginal traditional owners and the broader community in decision-making at all stages of planning, development and management (see also The Greens (WA) [Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#) policy)
- to protect and preserve historical and cultural sites of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal significance within the marine environment
- a coastal plan for the whole of the coastal zone that:
 - identifies the coastal compartments and sediment cells that comprise the coastal zone
 - identifies that part of the coastal zone most likely to be affected by the adverse impacts of coastal hazards (based on coastal risk and vulnerability assessments) in which stringent development controls will apply
- strict development controls to apply within the most vulnerable area of the coastal zone as identified in the coastal plan, including:
 - adequate setbacks
 - a prohibition on marine developments other than maritime infrastructure
 - only specified short term or exempt development to be permitted within that area
- mandatory local adaptation and management plans to apply based on coastal compartment rather than jurisdictional boundaries

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

- prohibit the sale of sea bed, river beds and adjoining foreshores
- develop strategies to phase out sewage outfalls into the ocean with a view to implementing low energy treatment alternatives
- ensure that adequate resources are provided to monitor and enforce compliance with policies, legislation and regulations which assist with conservation of the marine environment
- end shell sand mining to preserve seagrasses in the Cockburn Sound/Owen Anchorage area
- establish a comprehensive, adequate and representative network of Marine Parks and Reserves throughout the State and ensure these Parks and Reserves:
 - are selected on the basis of bio-physical criteria recommended by an independent scientific working group
 - are zoned and managed following an agreement, across government agencies, on specific, measurable biodiversity conservation outcomes
 - are adequately resourced and managed on an ecosystem basis
 - contain functionally-effective, representative no-take areas exclude exploration and mining

- provide for full community involvement in its planning and development
- ensure all Port Authorities are required to produce and adhere to an Environment Management Plan, particularly to control acceptance of solid and oil waste, minimise pollution and prevent ballast water introduction
- assess the extent of infestations of exotic species introduced through ballast water and introduce better measures to control these pests

(See also the [Australian Greens Marine and Coastal Areas](#) policy)

Glossary

1. The **precautionary principle** states that if an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or to the environment, in the absence of scientific consensus that the action or policy is harmful, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action.

Marine & Coastal policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017