

Media Release – The Hon Shelley Payne MLC

Record submissions made on proposed South Coast Marine Park

18 June 2024

- More than 19,000 submissions received during four-month public comment period for proposed South Coast Marine Park
- Feedback to be assessed over the coming months

Thousands of submissions have been received from individuals and organisations during the consultation process for the proposed South Coast Marine Park.

The proposed marine park's four-month public comment period - which is longer than was legally required - closed on Sunday 16 June.

While the final number of submissions has yet to be tabulated, it's estimated more than 19,000 submissions were received throughout the process.

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) has been engaging with the south coast community and industry about Western Australia's newest marine park since 2021.

The public submission process included an information station operating in Esperance for nine weeks - the first time this has been done for a public consultation of this kind - as well as stalls at local markets and at the Condingup Fair.

Marine park planners also held meetings with commercial and recreational fishers, community groups, and local authorities during the process, receiving valuable feedback that will be considered as part of the evaluation of public submissions.

Submissions will be analysed and assessed to assist in the development of the management plans for the four marine areas between Bremer Bay and the South Australian border.

Further updates on the consultation and planning process will continue to be provided via <https://www.dbca.wa.gov.au/management/parks/plan-our-parks/proposed-south-coast-marine-park>.

Comments attributed to Member for the Agricultural Region Hon Shelley Payne MLC:

“Our Government conducted more consultation for the proposed South Coast Marine Park than any government has for a marine park in the history of Western Australia.

“I am pleased to see that so many in Esperance, as well as our other communities along the south coast, took the time to share their feedback on the proposal.

“Thank you to everyone who completed a submission – your comments will be valuable in informing the park's final management plan.”

Comments attributed to Environment Minister Reece Whitby:

“I want to thank Western Australia's south coast communities for their high level of engagement during consultation on the proposed South Coast Marine Park.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to create a world-class marine park that rivals Ningaloo or the Great Barrier Reef and to protect the environmental values, economic benefits, and lifestyle that we know and enjoy.

"I recognise the strength of feeling in the community on this issue and acknowledge the significant level of interest in the consultation.

"We are not going to rush this process and will now take the time to work through submissions in the coming months.

"Public submissions will be carefully considered to see how the plans can be improved to strike the right balance for the broader community.

"On behalf of the State Government, I again want to thank everyone who has contributed to this process."

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