



Marine and Coastal Areas

Policy Category: A. Environment

Issued: March 2007

Principles

The Australian Greens believe that:

1. a cooperative national approach to coastal management is required to deliver clean and healthy environments, integrated ecosystems and sustainable coastal communities.
2. the application of the precautionary principle is fundamental to sustainable management of marine, coastal and estuarine ecosystems.
3. fisheries must be managed as a part of a broader ecosystem which meets the needs of natural predators as well as humans.
4. the native title claims to sea country by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be acknowledged, including their right to sustainably access customary fishing grounds.
5. the health of Australia's estuarine, coastal and marine environment is dependent on land management that recognises the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.
6. ecosystems-based management is the most sustainable and appropriate model for the management of Australia's marine territories.
7. the health of Australia's fishing industries is dependent on adequate conservation and sustainable management measures that ensure the replenishment of fishing stocks.
8. 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.

Goals

The Australian Greens want:

9. a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative (CAR) system of marine reserves in both Commonwealth and state and territory waters, to adequately conserve and protect Australia's unique marine, coastal and estuarine biodiversity.
10. statutory ecosystems-based regional marine planning that enables the full range of uses and impacts to be identified and managed, and allocates resources across and within marine industry sectors.
11. a reduction in fishery by-catch and habitat damage from both commercial and recreational fishing and other marine activities, and the conservation of key target species.
12. a strengthened cooperative national approach to the identification, containment and eradication of introduced marine pests.
13. implementation by all levels of government of the National Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
14. protection of the habitat of all marine mammals.
15. a global ban on commercial and so-called scientific take or other killing of all whales and other cetaceans, except for sustainable indigenous subsistence hunting.

Measures

The Australian Greens will:

16. introduce an Oceans Act that coordinates sustainability of ocean uses through a statutory National Oceans Authority, reporting to the parliament, and enforcing ecosystem-based regional management plans and targets.
17. as part of the Oceans Act, legally define Australia's exclusive economic zone as extending only to the internationally recognised 200 mile limit from the coastline, not the undersea continental shelf.
18. introduce new laws to address the full range of threats to marine mammals, protect animals from harm, and to conserve species.
19. in cooperation with the states and territories, review all offshore constitutional settlements to ensure consistent regulation across state and Commonwealth marine boundaries, and assess the need for a single National Oceans Authority administrative area for Australia's marine territory.
20. ensure that the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas program has legislated targets of a minimum of 30% 'no take' areas per bioregion by 2012.
21. expand the Indigenous Protected Areas Program to include marine based proclamations and management and develop programs for using traditional marine law and customary tenure systems for ecologically sustainable marine management.
22. fund the next regional marine planning process with a requirement for its completion around Australia within 10 years.
23. require States to implement regional marine planning processes in State waters that complement national Regional Marine Plans.
24. introduce random mandatory vessel monitoring systems in Australian waters and increase mandatory observer coverage to at least 50% of all commercial vessels.
25. phase out the entry into Australian waters of all single skin tankers.
26. create a register of unsafe or inappropriate vessels (identified by flags, owners, charterers and survey societies) and prohibit these from entering Australian waters.
27. appropriately resource the monitoring and evaluation of the state of Australia's marine and coastal resources.
28. establish trilateral agreements and adequately resource the implementation of the National Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
29. work with the states & territories to reduce land-based sources of marine pollution, including pollution from diffuse urban and agricultural sources.
30. introduce national standards for the ecological health of beaches and coastal lagoons.
31. strengthen the management of introduced marine pests, and investigate the most effective means by which to prevent their introduction by international shipping.
32. support all appropriate sanctuaries and measures to protect marine mammals from hunting, except for sustainable indigenous subsistence hunting.
33. reaffirm support for a comprehensive international ban on commercial whaling, the abolition of so called 'scientific' whaling, and an international ban on the sale of whale meat and by-products.

AUSTRALIAN GREENS POLICY: Marine and Coastal Areas (cont'd)

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34. restrict the use of seismic devices and other technologies that cause ecological harm, particularly to marine mammals.
35. restrict the testing of military and naval explosive devices in the oceans to minimise the impacts on marine and coastal ecosystems.
36. eliminate harmful and toxic waste dumping into Australian waters.