

# Draft Marine and Coastal Policy

## Summary Paper



The Victorian Government is continuing its commitment to providing a healthy and well-managed marine and coastal environment by developing a draft Marine and Coastal Policy.

The draft Marine and Coastal Policy (the draft Policy) is a key step in implementing the new *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* (the Act). A final Marine and Coastal Policy is due by 31 December 2019.

The Act requires a Marine and Coastal Policy to be made that:

- sets out policies for planning and managing the marine and coastal environment
- provides guidance to decision makers in delivering the objectives of the Act
- includes a Marine Spatial Planning Framework to set out steps for achieving integrated and coordinated planning and management of Victoria's marine environment.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) has worked closely with key government and non-government groups to prepare the draft Policy.

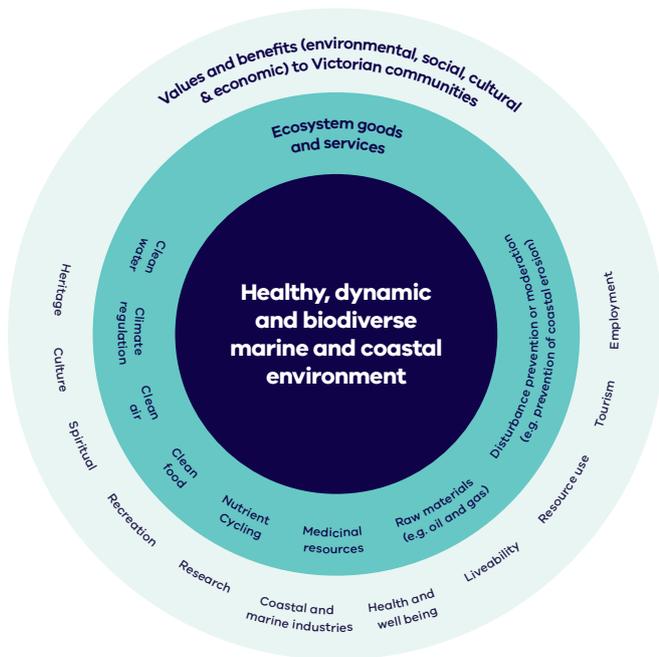
Victoria's marine and coastal environment is a special and unique place that provides enormous social, cultural and economic benefits to all Victorians in addition to its intrinsic natural values. These benefits contribute to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Victorian communities.

The Marine and Coastal Policy will provide guidance and long-term direction for the sustainable management and use of the marine and coastal environment in the face of challenges from climate change, population growth, and ageing coastal infrastructure. The draft Policy provides the state-wide direction necessary to deliver a coordinated and integrated approach to all marine and coastal planning and management. By protecting and sustainably managing the marine and coastal environment the Policy will support long-term social wellbeing and economic growth for Victoria.

**We need your input and ideas to this draft Policy to ensure that the final Marine and Coastal Policy reflects the Victorian community's views on how the marine and coastal environment should be planned for and managed.**

**Our vision is for a healthy, dynamic and biodiverse marine and coastal environment that benefits the Victorian community now and in the future**

**Figure 1: Importance of a healthy marine and coastal environment**

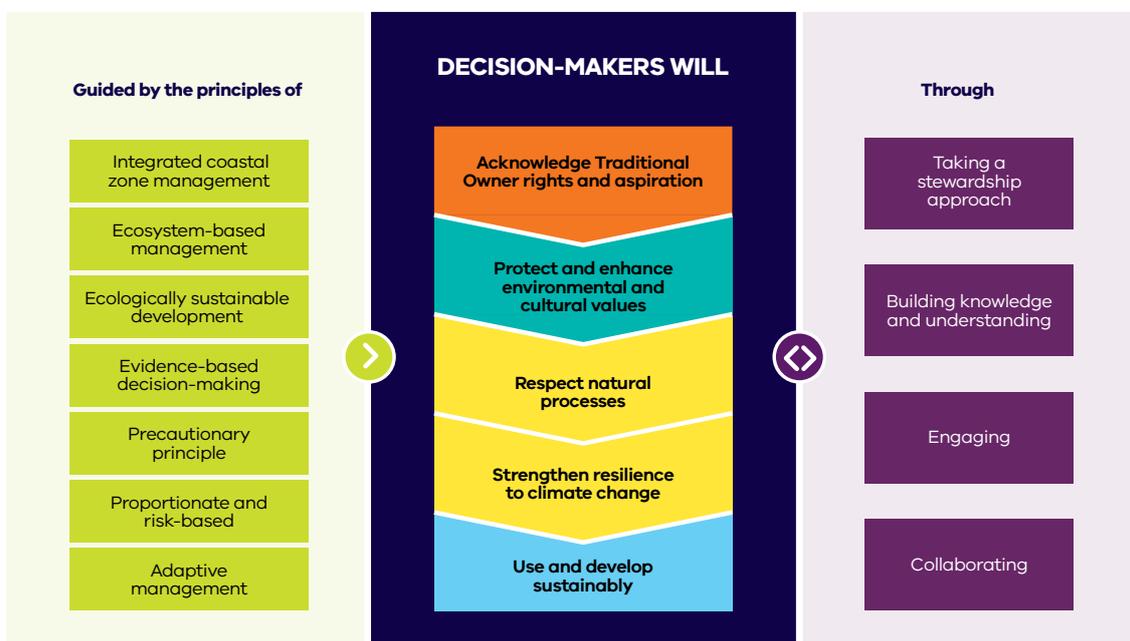


The draft Policy builds on the strengths of the *Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014* and fills identified gaps. It aims to ensure Victoria’s marine and coastal environment is healthy, dynamic and biodiverse so that it can continue to provide ecosystem goods and services and values and benefits to the Victorian community (see **Figure 1**).

The draft Policy proposes a Planning and Decision Pathway (see **Figure 2**) that groups individual policies into a step-by-step approach to decision making and providing direction in achieving the guiding principles and nine objectives of the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*.

**Figure 2: The Planning and Decision Pathway sets out how the guiding principles and policies (grouped under the Planning and Decision Pathway steps) must be considered in decision-making**

## PLANNING AND DECISION PATHWAY



The steps of the **Planning and Decision Pathway** have individual policy themes (grouped into chapters) and each theme has an outcome that the policies seek to achieve.

**DECISION-MAKERS WILL:**

**Step 1 Acknowledge Traditional Owner rights and aspirations**

Theme	Outcome
<b>Traditional Owner rights, aspirations and knowledge</b>	Current and future generations of Traditional Owners care for and respect land and Sea Country through self-determination and two-way learning.

**Step 2 Protect and enhance environmental and cultural values**

Theme	Outcome
<b>Ecosystems and habitats</b>	<p>Ecosystem-based management is consistently applied so that Victoria’s marine and coastal ecosystems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are healthy, functioning, resilient and valued in their own right;</li> <li>• provide goods and benefits to Victorians now and in the future.</li> </ul> <p>Victoria’s marine and coastal environment contains a healthy, diverse and connected range of habitats.</p>
<b>Natural features and landscapes</b>	Significant natural features and landscapes (including seascapes) in the marine and coastal environment are protected and enhanced recognising that marine and coastal processes will cause change.
<b>Heritage and cultural values</b>	Cultural values and sites of heritage significance in the marine and coastal environment are protected for current and future generations.
<b>Marine and Coastal Crown land</b>	The benefits of marine and coastal Crown land are available to current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to enjoy similar benefits.

**Step 3 and 4 Respect natural processes and strengthen resilience to climate change**

Theme	Outcome
<b>Managing risks from marine and coastal hazards</b>	<p>Risks from coastal hazards are understood and managed.</p> <p>Climate change impacts are understood and their negative impacts on the environmental, social, and economic values of the marine and coastal environment are minimised.</p> <p>Adaptation is integrated as a core component of planning in the marine and coastal environment, and is used to improve decision-making, manage uncertainty and build resilience.</p>
<b>Emergency management</b>	Emergency responses in the marine and coastal environment are effectively planned to minimise immediate and long-term impact on human life and local values and reduce future risk.

## Step 5 Use and develop sustainably

Theme	Outcome
<b>Sustainable use and development</b>	<p>Victoria's marine and coastal environment hosts a diverse range of uses and experiences that do not compromise the values of this finite area.</p> <p>Use and development of the marine and coastal environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• is ecologically sustainable</li><li>• is equitable</li><li>• in appropriate locations</li><li>• minimises impacts on environmental values and other uses;</li><li>• improves the total quality of life of Victorians, across current and future generations.</li></ul>
<b>Coastal settlements</b>	<p>Growth of coastal settlements is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable.</p>
<b>Buildings, structures and access</b>	<p>Buildings, structures and facilities on public and private land in the marine and coastal environment exhibit excellence in siting and design that is sympathetic to the coastal and marine landscape context and minimise impacts on the environment.</p> <p>Use and development of marine and coastal Crown land is functionally dependent on being near or in the water and provide significant public benefit.</p> <p>Access to marine and coastal Crown land is developed and located to minimise risk to public safety and protects environmental and cultural values.</p>
<b>Marine and coastal industries</b>	<p>Marine and coastal industries are valued for their contribution to the well-being and function of Victorian communities and the economy.</p>
<b>Recreation and Tourism</b>	<p>The marine and coastal environment hosts a diverse range of recreation and tourism experiences strategically planned and located to be safe, equitable and sustainable now and in the future.</p>

### THROUGH:

#### Stewardship, knowledge, collaborate and engage

Theme	Outcome
<b>Stewardship and collaborative management</b>	<p>Community and user groups are actively engaged in caring for, protecting and improving the health of the marine and coastal environment.</p> <p>Communities, organisations and user groups as stewards collaborate to deliver integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine and coastal environment.</p> <p>Marine and coastal managers have the knowledge, skills and capacity to manage current and future challenges.</p> <p>Improved access to and quality of knowledge and understanding of the marine and coastal environment is used to inform evidence-based decision making and evaluate the effectiveness of those decisions.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>Planning and management of marine and coastal Crown land is strategically funded and resourced to effectively manage current and future challenges.</p>

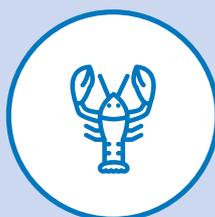
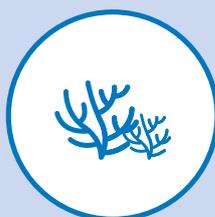
Victoria's first **Marine Spatial Planning Framework** (MSP Framework) sets out a process for achieving integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine environment. Co-designed with marine stakeholders, it provides guidance for how the many sectors associated with marine environment can work together to provide for existing and future uses and overcome challenges.

## **PART A - Guidance for integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine environment**

Part A of the MSP Framework should be considered by individual marine sectors when undertaking planning and management activities and decision making. It should also be used to guide any marine spatial planning processes that occur in Victoria, outputs (marine plans) that result from these processes, and subsequent implementation.

<b>Aspiration</b>	Victoria's aspiration for integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine environment
<b>Goals</b>	The goals focus on the outcomes of integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine environment
<b>Principles</b>	The principles outline the nature and characteristics of integrated planning and management of the marine environment and the results to be achieved through application of the MSP Framework
<b>Data and information</b>	Guidance on statewide data and information available to assist planning and decision making as part of the marine spatial planning process or within individual sectoral planning
<b>Legislative and policy context</b>	Description of existing legislative and policy contexts governing the activities and uses of the marine environment
<b>Integration with land-based planning and other jurisdictions</b>	Guidance on integration with land and catchment planning, and across jurisdiction boundaries (State-State and State-Commonwealth)

### **Existing legislation / policy / planning and management**

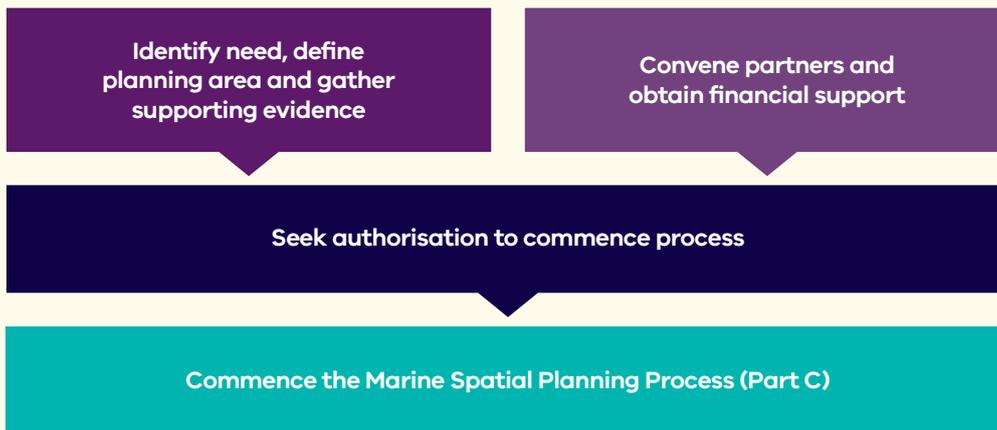


Activities in the marine environment are already subject to existing legislation and government policy. The MSP Framework does not override or replace existing planning, management and decision making by marine sectors such as maritime transportation, oil and gas development, fisheries and conservation. Rather, it provides an overarching framework to support integration and coordination across sectors.



## PART B - Initiating Marine Spatial Planning

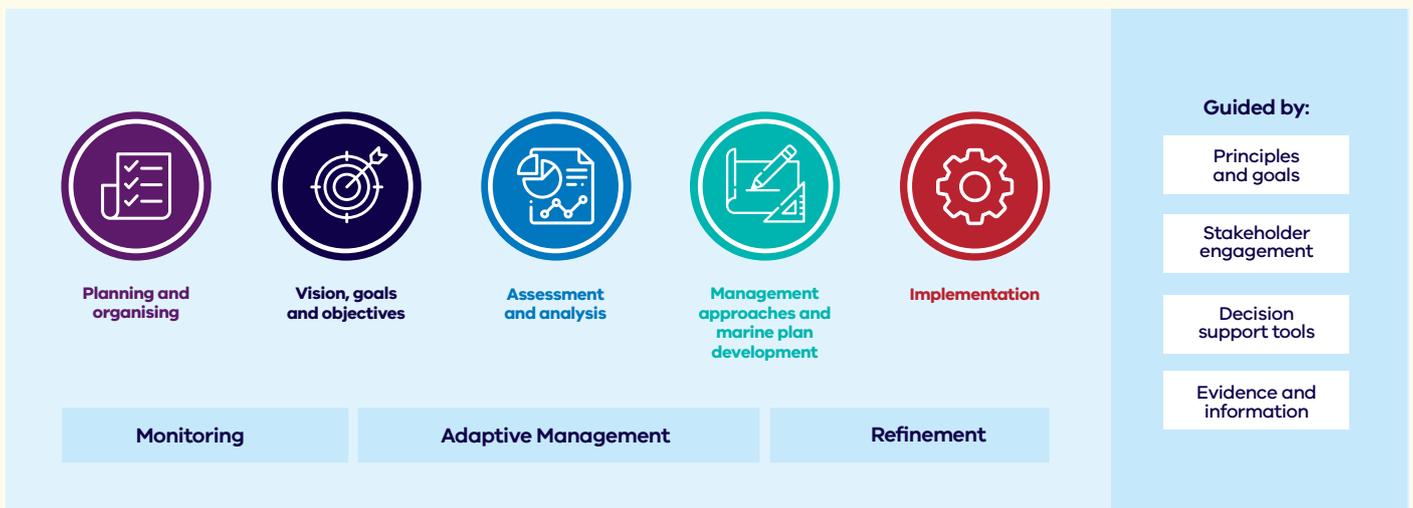
Part B details how to initiate a marine spatial planning process



## PART C - The Marine Spatial Planning Process

Where it has been determined that a marine spatial planning process is required, a series of steps are to be completed. The entire process is guided by the principles from Part A, and must be supported by stakeholder engagement, best available evidence and information, and decision support tools.

The process also has feedback loops between steps, with monitoring supporting ongoing adaptive management and refinement of marine plans.





### Significant new or changed areas proposed within the draft Policy include:

- Recognising Traditional Owners' ongoing connection to Country and supporting a self-determination model to care for land and Sea Country.
- Acknowledging the importance of use and development of the marine and coastal environment to people, groups, communities and industries and the Victorian economy, and providing direction on how to use and develop sustainably in appropriate locations.
- Victoria's first Marine Spatial Planning Framework for achieving integrated and coordinated planning and management of the marine environment. Co-designed with marine stakeholders, it sets out a process for creating marine plans.
- Providing strong direction on climate change including a focus on embedding adaptation in all planning processes and decision making. Building the resilience of people and communities and the natural environment to climate impacts.
- Retaining the current planning benchmark, to plan for not less than 0.8m sea level rise by 2100. (This may be revised following Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report scheduled to be released in September 2019).
- Clarifying that the State will prioritise actions strategically and use a risk-based approach to protect public values.
- Promoting a sustainable funding process to improve marine and coastal planning and management that articulates that funding is a shared responsibility of all levels of government, beneficiaries and users.
- Enshrining the ongoing public ownership of marine and coastal Crown land for the benefit of all Victorians.
- Supporting the consistent application of ecosystem-based management to enable marine and coastal ecosystems to be healthy, functioning, resilient, and to provide goods and services to Victorians now and in the future.

A Marine and Coastal Strategy will be developed in 2020 to outline the priority actions to achieve the final policy's objectives.



## How was the draft Policy developed?

Development of the draft Policy was guided by the Victorian Marine and Coastal Council. It has been prepared in consultation with key government and non-government groups with representation across various sectors (e.g. Traditional Owners, conservation, heritage, industry).

DELWP will continue to take a whole-of-government approach to finalising the Policy to ensure it is effective in sustainably managing our marine and coastal environment for current and future generations of Victorians to enjoy.

Marine and Coastal Act 2018  
requirement

Research, planning,  
co-learning & review

Testing, refining and  
co-designing with  
stakeholder groups

Public consultation

Revise draft following review  
of public submissions

Final policy released by  
31 December 2019

## How can I get involved?

We seek your views, comments, and responses on the draft Policy. Hearing, understanding and considering the views and experiences of marine and coastal users and the community is critical to the success of the final Policy.

Get involved by:

- Visiting the consultation website - Engage Victoria <https://engage.vic.gov.au> - to provide feedback or upload a submission
- Emailing a submission to [Marine.CoastalPolicy@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:Marine.CoastalPolicy@delwp.vic.gov.au)
- Mailing a submission to:  
Draft Marine and Coastal Policy  
Policy and Strategy Unit  
Department of Environment, Land,  
Water and Planning  
PO Box 500  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

You can make a submission until **15 August 2019**.

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