



Australian Government

Department of Sustainability, Environment,  
Water, Population and Communities

# HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE SOUTH-WEST MARINE REGION

The draft South-west Marine Bioregional Plan and a proposed network of Commonwealth marine reserves for the South-west Marine Region have been released for public consultation. For more information visit the Department's website:  
<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/south-west/index.html>

People with an interest in the draft South-west Marine Bioregional Plan and the proposed South-west marine reserve network are encouraged to provide written feedback. The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities' website contains information about how to lodge a submission and closing dates for receiving submissions.

If you have any questions about how to make a submission or on any other aspects of the marine bioregional planning process please email [Southwest.MarinePlan@environment.gov.au](mailto:Southwest.MarinePlan@environment.gov.au) or phone 1800 069 352.

The submissions forms are available at <http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/south-west/index.html>, and

- can be completed and submitted online; or
- saved and emailed to [Submission.Southwest@environment.gov.au](mailto:Submission.Southwest@environment.gov.au) or
- printed and posted free of charge to:

MBP Submissions – South-west  
Reply Paid 787  
Canberra, ACT 2601

## When will new marine reserves in the South-west Marine Region take effect?

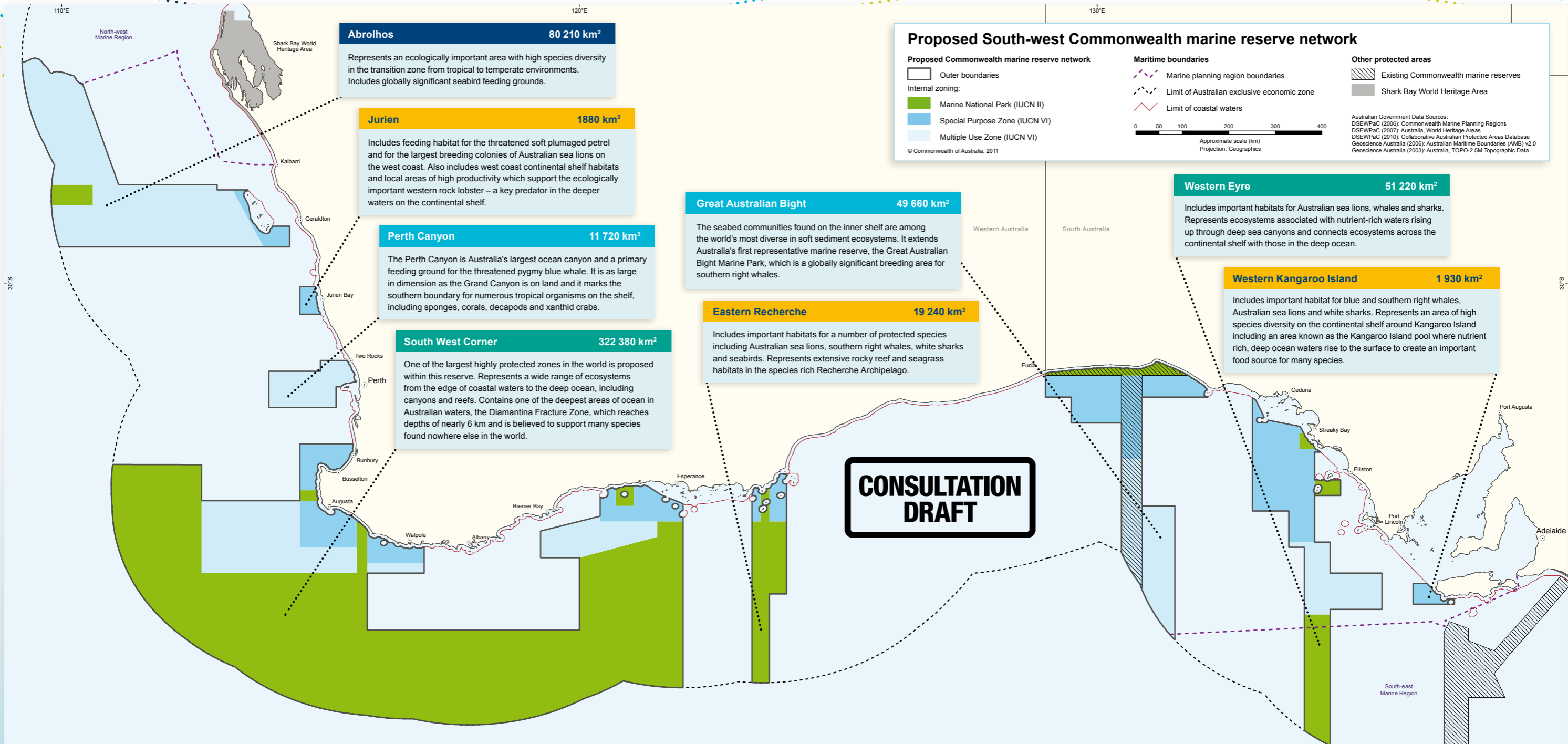
The proposed South-west reserve network will be completed after public consultation has concluded and submissions have been considered.



## Developing Marine Reserves and marine bioregional planning in Australia's South-west

DRAFT FOR COMMENT /  
PUBLIC CONSULTATION





**Abrolhos 80 210 km<sup>2</sup>**

Represents an ecologically important area with high species diversity in the transition zone from tropical to temperate environments. Includes globally significant seabird feeding grounds.

**Jurien 1880 km<sup>2</sup>**

Includes feeding habitat for the threatened soft plumaged petrel and for the largest breeding colonies of Australian sea lions on the west coast. Also includes west coast continental shelf habitats and local areas of high productivity which support the ecologically important western rock lobster – a key predator in the deeper waters on the continental shelf.

**Perth Canyon 11 720 km<sup>2</sup>**

The Perth Canyon is Australia's largest ocean canyon and a primary feeding ground for the threatened pygmy blue whale. It is as large in dimension as the Grand Canyon is on land and it marks the southern boundary for numerous tropical organisms on the shelf, including sponges, corals, decapods and xanthid crabs.

**South West Corner 322 380 km<sup>2</sup>**

One of the largest highly protected zones in the world is proposed within this reserve. Represents a wide range of ecosystems from the edge of coastal waters to the deep ocean, including canyons and reefs. Contains one of the deepest areas of ocean in Australian waters, the Diamantina Fracture Zone, which reaches depths of nearly 6 km and is believed to support many species found nowhere else in the world.

**Great Australian Bight 49 660 km<sup>2</sup>**

The seabed communities found on the inner shelf are among the world's most diverse in soft sediment ecosystems. It extends Australia's first representative marine reserve, the Great Australian Bight Marine Park, which is a globally significant breeding area for southern right whales.

**Eastern Recherche 19 240 km<sup>2</sup>**

Includes important habitats for a number of protected species including Australian sea lions, southern right whales, white sharks and seabirds. Represents extensive rocky reef and seagrass habitats in the species rich Recherche Archipelago.

**Western Eyre 51 220 km<sup>2</sup>**

Includes important habitats for Australian sea lions, whales and sharks. Represents ecosystems associated with nutrient-rich waters rising up through deep sea canyons and connects ecosystems across the continental shelf with those in the deep ocean.

**Western Kangaroo Island 1 930 km<sup>2</sup>**

Includes important habitat for blue and southern right whales, Australian sea lions and white sharks. Represents an area of high species diversity on the continental shelf around Kangaroo Island including an area known as the Kangaroo Island pool where nutrient rich, deep ocean waters rise to the surface to create an important food source for many species.

**CONSULTATION DRAFT**

**THE PROPOSED SOUTH-WEST RESERVE NETWORK**

The South-west Marine Region is an area of rich biodiversity and home to many species found nowhere else in the world. The Leeuwin Current has a strong influence on the region, bringing warm water from the tropics, down the west coast and then eastwards into the Great Australian Bight.

The South-west Marine Region is recognised as an area of global significance for breeding and feeding grounds for a number of protected marine species, including Australian sea lions, southern right whales, blue whales, white sharks and seabirds.

The Perth Canyon and the canyons south of Kangaroo Island are the only two known blue whale feeding areas in the region.

Populations of Australian sea lions breed and feed throughout the year in colonies stretching from the Houtman Abrolhos Islands in Western Australia to the Pages Islands in South Australia.

The Recherche Archipelago is one of the South-west's key biodiversity hotspots with over 1000 species including 30 percent of Australia's unique fish species and over 400 species of coral.

The South-west Marine Region is considered internationally important for seabirds. 18 of the 48 species that occur in the region have significant proportions of their breeding or foraging areas here (or on adjacent islands). Up to 1.4 million seabirds breed off South Australia and in Western Australia more than one million pairs of seabirds breed annually on the Houtman Abrolhos Islands alone.

New Commonwealth marine reserves are being identified through the bioregional planning process to help ensure that examples of all of Australia's different marine ecosystems, habitats and the life they support are protected for future generations. Following public consultation, reserves in the South-west will become part of the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas – a joint undertaking of the Commonwealth, state and Northern Territory governments.

The reserves have been designed with the aim of capturing the diversity of marine ecosystems and habitats around Australia.

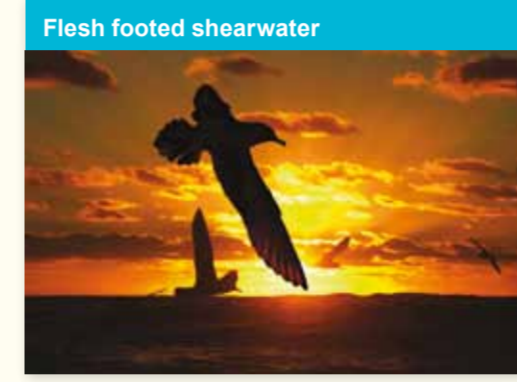
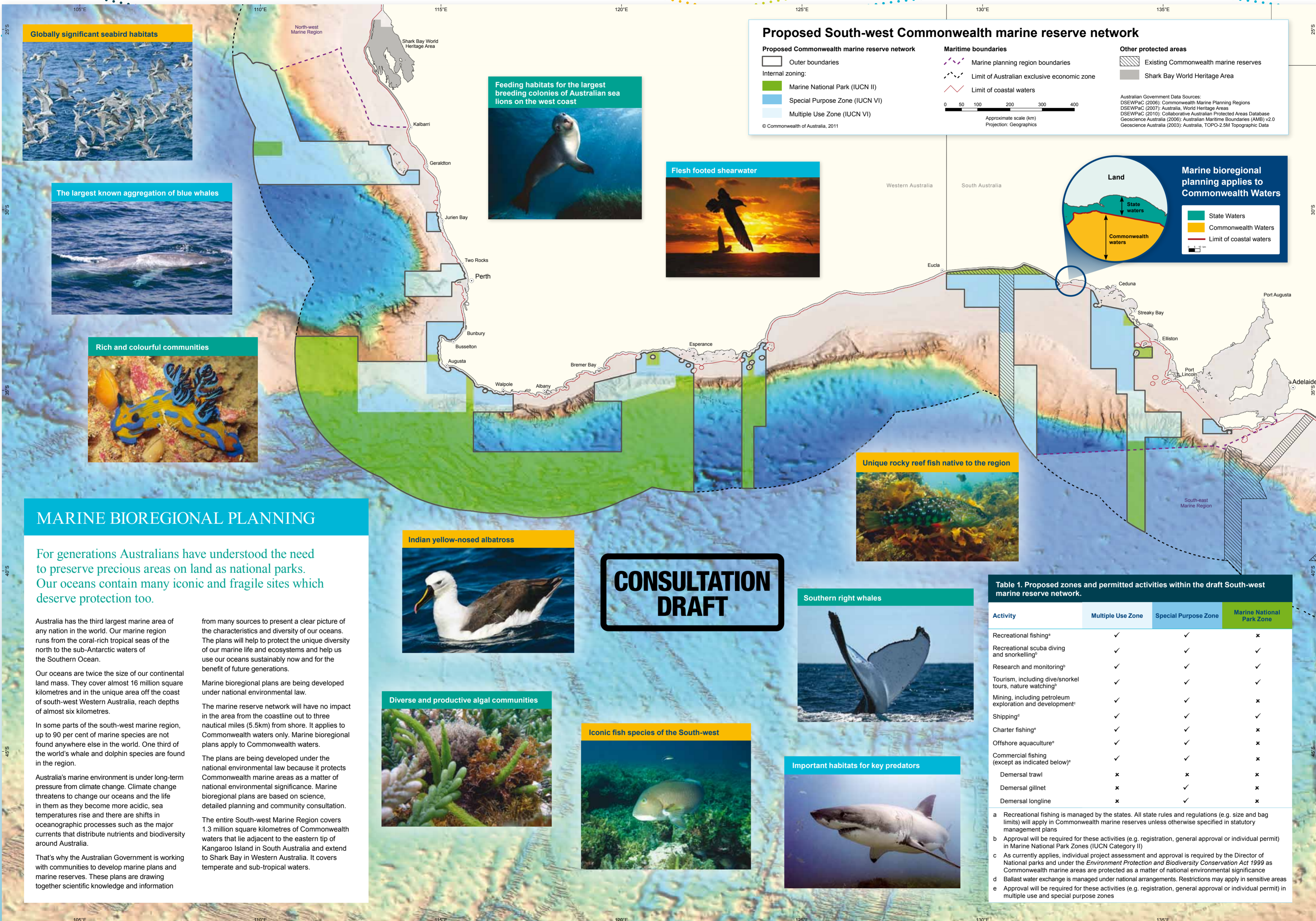
The outer boundaries and zones of the proposed reserves have been designed to minimise impacts on people and industries who are currently using marine resources.

The proposal includes a network of 8 marine reserves located in Commonwealth waters:

- Abrolhos
- Jurien
- Perth Canyon
- South-west Corner
- Eastern Recherche
- Great Australian Bight
- Western Eyre
- Western Kangaroo Island

Area of the South-west marine region	1 292 015 km <sup>2</sup>
Area of the draft marine reserve network proposed in the South-west	538 226 km <sup>2</sup>

Australian Government Data Sources:  
 DSEWPac (2006): Commonwealth Marine Planning Regions  
 DSEWPac (2007): Australia, World Heritage Areas  
 DSEWPac (2010): Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database  
 Geoscience Australia (2006): Australian Maritime Boundaries (AMB) v2.0  
 Geoscience Australia (2003): Australia, TOPO-2.5M Topographic Data



**CONSULTATION DRAFT**

**MARINE BIOREGIONAL PLANNING**

For generations Australians have understood the need to preserve precious areas on land as national parks. Our oceans contain many iconic and fragile sites which deserve protection too.

Australia has the third largest marine area of any nation in the world. Our marine region runs from the coral-rich tropical seas of the north to the sub-Antarctic waters of the Southern Ocean.

Our oceans are twice the size of our continental land mass. They cover almost 16 million square kilometres and in the unique area off the coast of south-west Western Australia, reach depths of almost six kilometres.

In some parts of the south-west marine region, up to 90 per cent of marine species are not found anywhere else in the world. One third of the world's whale and dolphin species are found in the region.

Australia's marine environment is under long-term pressure from climate change. Climate change threatens to change our oceans and the life in them as they become more acidic, sea temperatures rise and there are shifts in oceanographic processes such as the major currents that distribute nutrients and biodiversity around Australia.

That's why the Australian Government is working with communities to develop marine plans and marine reserves. These plans are drawing together scientific knowledge and information

from many sources to present a clear picture of the characteristics and diversity of our oceans. The plans will help to protect the unique diversity of our marine life and ecosystems and help us use our oceans sustainably now and for the benefit of future generations.

Marine bioregional plans are being developed under national environmental law.

The marine reserve network will have no impact in the area from the coastline out to three nautical miles (5.5km) from shore. It applies to Commonwealth waters only. Marine bioregional plans apply to Commonwealth waters.

The plans are being developed under the national environmental law because it protects Commonwealth marine areas as a matter of national environmental significance. Marine bioregional plans are based on science, detailed planning and community consultation.

The entire South-west Marine Region covers 1.3 million square kilometres of Commonwealth waters that lie adjacent to the eastern tip of Kangaroo Island in South Australia and extend to Shark Bay in Western Australia. It covers temperate and sub-tropical waters.

Table 1. Proposed zones and permitted activities within the draft South-west marine reserve network.

Activity	Multiple Use Zone	Special Purpose Zone	Marine National Park Zone
Recreational fishing <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓	✗
Recreational scuba diving and snorkelling <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Research and monitoring <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Tourism, including dive/snorkel tours, nature watching <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Mining, including petroleum exploration and development <sup>c</sup>	✓	✓	✗
Shipping <sup>d</sup>	✓	✓	✓
Charter fishing <sup>e</sup>	✓	✓	✗
Offshore aquaculture <sup>e</sup>	✓	✓	✗
Commercial fishing (except as indicated below) <sup>e</sup>	✓	✓	✗
Demersal trawl	✗	✗	✗
Demersal gillnet	✗	✓	✗
Demersal longline	✗	✓	✗

a Recreational fishing is managed by the states. All state rules and regulations (e.g. size and bag limits) will apply in Commonwealth marine reserves unless otherwise specified in statutory management plans  
b Approval will be required for these activities (e.g. registration, general approval or individual permit) in Marine National Park Zones (IUCN Category II)  
c As currently applies, individual project assessment and approval is required by the Director of National parks and under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* as Commonwealth marine areas are protected as a matter of national environmental significance  
d Ballast water exchange is managed under national arrangements. Restrictions may apply in sensitive areas  
e Approval will be required for these activities (e.g. registration, general approval or individual permit) in multiple use and special purpose zones