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Marine Science Program

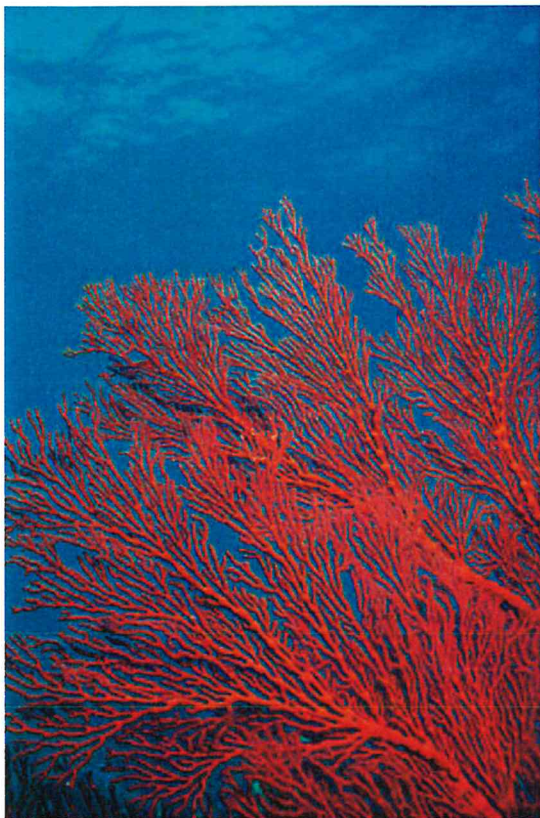
For more information contact:

Program Leader, Marine Science Program on (08) 9219 8761, email chris.simpson@dec.wa.gov.au

or visit DEC's website www.dec.wa.gov.au.

Scope

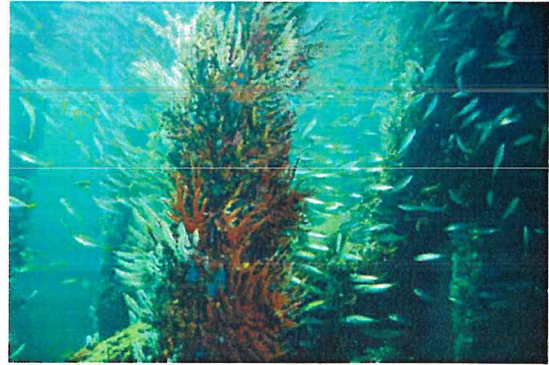
The role of the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) Marine Science Program is to ensure Western Australia's marine biodiversity conservation and management programs are based on good science.



What we do

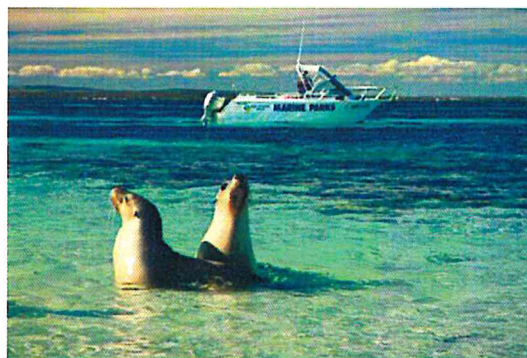
- Focus on the ecological and social marine science (i.e. research, monitoring and science communication) needed to inform adaptive management of WA's marine protected area network, the conservation of large marine fauna and the conservation of the State's marine biodiversity.
- Contribute to the biophysical and social surveys and research needed to identify and plan for new marine protected areas, contribute to the development of marine policy and coordinate regional marine planning.
- Lead DEC's participation in the Western Australian Marine Science Institution, including its Ningaloo Research Program, and establish and deliver strategic collaborations with marine science providers including universities, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, CSIRO, State agencies such as the Department of Fisheries, industry and community groups through initiatives such as the Natural Heritage Trust.
- Use funding to increase departmental capacity to undertake marine science, provide leverage for collaborative projects through external science providers or commission research and monitoring as required. Marine science projects will address priorities outlined in existing marine management plans and other information needs as required.





Current key activities and projects

- Implementing the DEC Marine Science Strategy.
- Coordinating the Ningaloo Research Program within the Western Australian Marine Science Institution.
- Reviewing historical, current and planned marine conservation research and monitoring programs in Western Australia.
- Ongoing monitoring of the coral-eating marine snail, *Drupella cornus*, in Ningaloo Marine Park.
- Undertaking ongoing coral reef recovery studies in Ningaloo Marine Park.
- Mapping coral reef communities in Shark Bay Marine Park and World Heritage Area.
- Undertaking comparative marine biodiversity surveys of the Rowley Shoals marine protected areas.
- Marine biodiversity mapping and monitoring surveys in the Montebello/Barrow islands marine conservation reserves.
- Surveying and assessing the condition of coral reefs in the proposed Dampier Archipelago Marine Park.
- Supporting relevant university and postgraduate student research projects with Marine Science Program seed-funding.



Marine Science Program staff are based at the Kensington research centre.