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Proposed **Marine Conservation Reserve in the South West Capes Region**

WHAT are Western Australian marine conservation reserves?

Marine conservation reserves are special areas which are:

- established to conserve the marine environment;
- managed sustainably to ensure that human uses do not overload the environment; and
- designed to protect environmental and social values, separate incompatible activities and minimise environmental damage.

WHY have marine conservation reserves?

The Western Australian marine environment is owned by all Western Australians and is a common asset available to all users. While the freedom of open access is cherished by most Western Australians, increasing levels of human use often leads to conflict among users and to environmental degradation.

The Western Australian system of marine conservation reserves has two primary roles:

- to preserve representative examples of all marine ecosystems; and
- to put a management framework in place that ensures the various human uses are managed in an equitable, integrated and sustainable manner.

WHERE in the South West?

The area under consideration runs along the west coast between Busselton and Augusta. It includes Hardy Inlet.

HOW are marine conservation reserves developed?

The planning process relies heavily on community participation.

Community based advisory committees are appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Heritage to assist the Department of Conservation and Land Management determine reserve boundaries, objectives and management strategies including management zones. A draft management plan is prepared and made available for a three-month public submission period before being finalised.

You are encouraged to get involved. Consultation will include stakeholder groups, local Government and the general community.

WHEN will the South West Capes Regional marine conservation reserve planning occur?

The first meeting of the community advisory committee is expected to take place around April 2003. Because of the complexity of the issues and the need for extensive public involvement, the establishment of a marine conservation reserve in the South West Capes Region is likely to take several years.

**For more information contact the office in Busselton
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