



Parliamentary Budget Office - Election Policy Costing

NSW Parliament • Parliament House, Macquarie Street Sydney NSW 2000

Referred By: Australian Labor Party
 Date Referred: 2/03/2015

Proposal No: A286
 Date Published: 23/03/2015

Proposal Title: **MARINE CONSERVATION POLICY**

Cluster: Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services

General Government Sector Impacts

	2014-15 \$'000	2015-16 \$'000	2016-17 \$'000	2017-18 \$'000	4 Year Total \$'000
Expenses (ex. depreciation)					-
Depreciation					-
Less: Offsets					-
Revenue					-
Net Operating Result:	-	-	-	-	-

Capital Expenditure					-
Capital Offsets					-
Capital Expenditure:	-	-	-	-	-

Net Lending/(Borrowing)	-	-	-	-	-
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Net Financial Liabilities:	-	-	-	-	-
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Total State Sector Impacts

Net Financial Liabilities:	-	-	-	-	-
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Notes and costing assumptions

The policy proposes to introduce a marine conservation policy to protect New South Wales's oceans, waterways and marine life. The intended date of implementation would be upon formation of government (April 2015).

The following assumptions have been made:

Elements one, three and four are commitments to prioritising and investigating regulatory change. Any future regulatory change would be subject to subsequent consideration and decision by government. Accordingly, commitments to elements one, three and four do not involve a cost at this time.

Element one: Lift the Government's moratorium on the creation of new marine parks (financial impact nil).

This commitment has already been implemented as a result of the commencement of the Marine Estate Management Act 2014 and associated repeal of the Marine Parks Act 1997 that established the moratorium on the creation of any new marine parks.

Element two: Return marine sanctuary zones to full protection (estimated cost of \$12,000 will be absorbed by the Department). This commitment would be accompanied by a communications strategy including advertising, signage, and stakeholder notification, and would be accompanied by a compliance advisory period for a period of 6 months during which first offenders would receive cautions in lieu of standard compliance action such as on-the-spot fines.

Costing assumptions continued:

Element three: Prioritise protection of breeding areas such as islands, headlands and beaches where seabirds nest and raise their young (financial impact nil). This element is costed at zero because it would be subject to government agreeing to implement regulatory change. As an indication of possible costs, from April 2015 to 2017/18, it would include two additional staff to develop and co-ordinate the policy (\$628,000) and approximately 10 additional sites to develop programs to enhance shorebird protection (\$351,000). Projects will use volunteers for monitoring and community awareness activities and initial operating costs will include improved signage and community awareness materials.

Element four: Ask the NSW Scientific Committee to consider the addition of the hawksbill sea turtle to the State's Threatened Species list (financial impact nil). Consideration of new nominations is within existing process for Scientific Committee.

Element five: Immediately reinstate protections on the state's Mid North Coast for the Grey Nurse Shark. (The estimated cost of \$20,000 would be incurred in the 2015/16 financial year). The Department should be able to absorb this cost within its resources. It has been assumed that the policy only refers to reinstating the fishing rules on the Mid North Coast (i.e. at Fish Rock and Green Island) as they were prior to the last election in March 2011. If the policy also intends reversing or amending the fishing rules and shape of the critical habitats at Green Island and at other Grey nurse shark critical habitat or aggregation areas in NSW, then this would involve undertaking a larger statutory consultation process the costs of which are unknown and have not been included in this costing.

Costs have been escalated by 2.5%.