



## **FACT SHEET 9 – Fisheries adjustment policy**

The Australian Government has released a Fisheries Adjustment Policy to support the creation of marine reserves in Commonwealth waters as part of the marine bioregional planning process.

The policy outlines how commercial fishing operators and fishing-dependent communities will be assisted if they are affected by the creation of Commonwealth marine reserves. This is an update of the 2004 policy statement on Marine Protected Areas and Displaced Fishing.

The development of the marine reserves is being guided by the [\*Goals and Principles for the Establishment of the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas in Commonwealth Waters\*](#) – see [www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/reserves/](http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/reserves/).

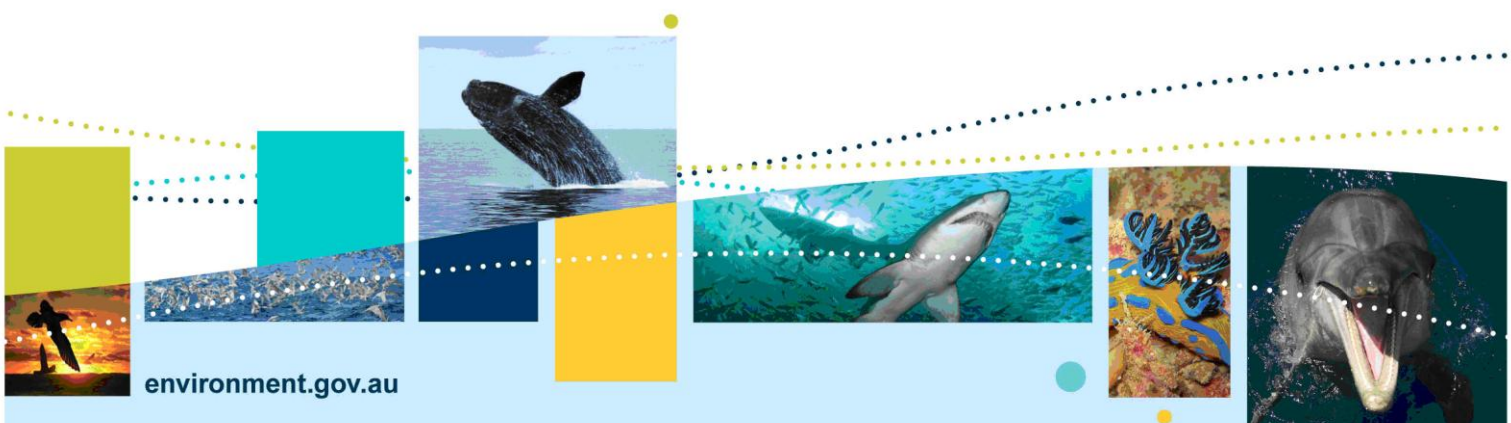
These goals and principles include a requirement to minimise the socio-economic impacts of reserves on users of the marine environment and its resources, including commercial fishers.

While the Government’s focus is on avoiding impacts on marine users, it may not always be possible to avoid impacts on some commercial fishing operations and businesses because this type of activity is widespread in the marine environment.

The Fisheries Adjustment Policy provides the framework for a consistent, transparent fair and equitable treatment of individual commercial fishers and those reliant on the fishing industry, in cases where impacts are unavoidable.

The policy:

- confirms the government’s commitment to the objective of minimising impacts
- outlines the rationale for providing assistance to the commercial fishing industry and fishing-dependent communities



- explains how the flow-on effects of creating marine reserves for biodiversity conservation should be considered in fisheries management
- provides for case by case assessment of the socioeconomic impacts of creating marine reserves
- sets out some key factors to take into account when making case by case decisions about the need for adjustment assistance
- provides for industry consultation during socioeconomic impact assessments and in the design of adjustment assistance.

The marine reserves system is being developed in a way that won't affect the operation of ports and shipping, defence, border protection and tourism, and avoids important areas for recreational fishing.

Marine reserves are also being designed to avoid areas of importance for the petroleum industry and national energy security, but where this isn't possible, multiple use zoning will be adopted to allow petroleum exploration and development subject to assessment and approval under national environmental law.

The socio-economic assessment of the proposed marine reserves network will be conducted by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES).

The assessment will provide:

- An analysis of the value of fishing catch and effort displaced by the proposed reserves
- Analysis of how the loss of that catch and activity would impact on fishing businesses and on regional communities – via port-of-landing data as well as surveys, case studies and modelling of flow-on impacts
- Analysis of how those impacts would affect regional economies in terms of employment and industry activity.

Input provided during the public consultation will help inform the socio-economic assessment.

For more information, please go to [www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/south-west](http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/south-west).



