



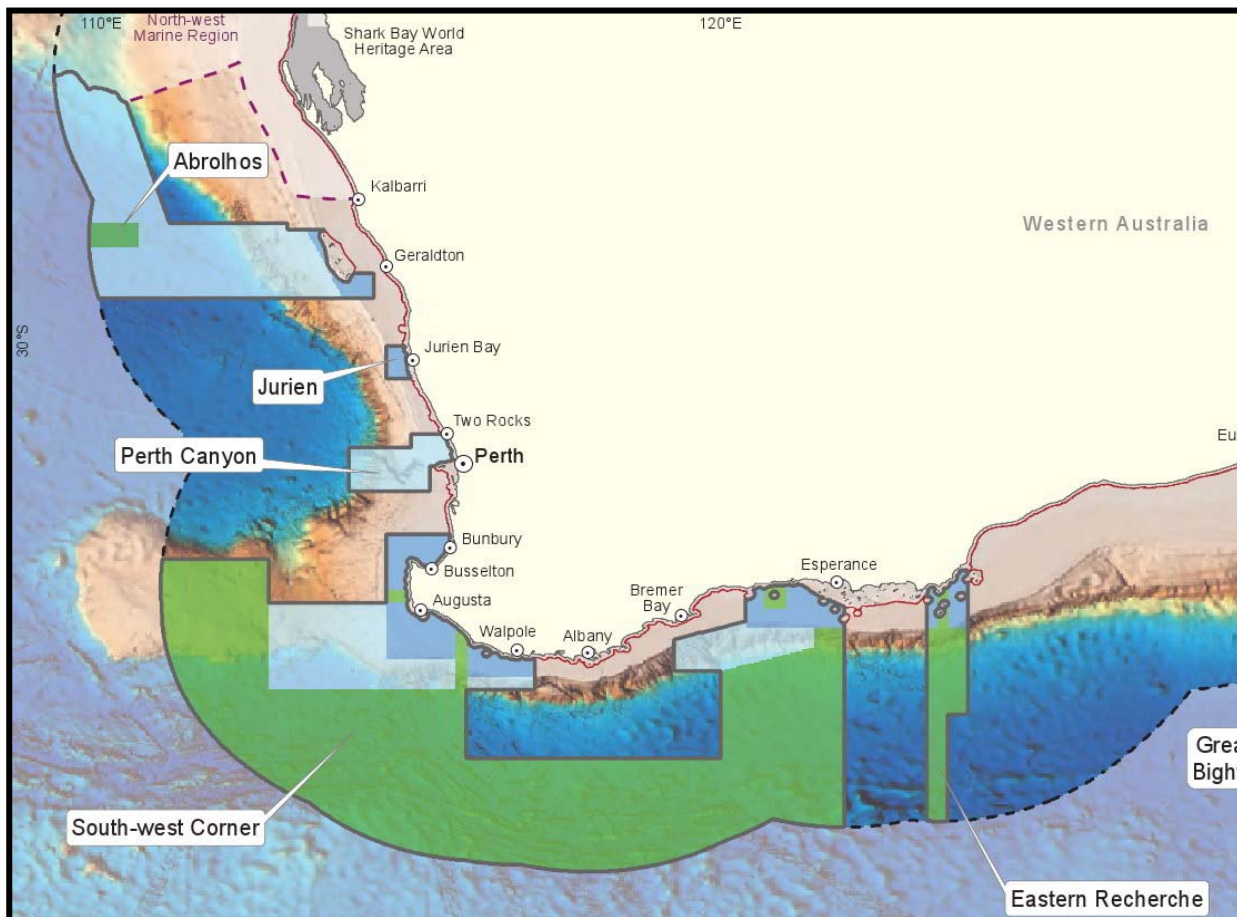
### Fishers Views Sought on Commonwealth Marine Parks

The Commonwealth Government this month released its DRAFT Bioregional Marine Plan for the South West region of Australia. This covers an area from north of Kalbarri in Western Australia, to Kangaroo Island in South Australia. As this is a Commonwealth process, the plan covers waters from 3 nautical miles out to 200 nm from the coast.

The draft South-west Plan comprises two separate, but equally important parts.

1) The **Draft South-west Bioregional Marine Plan** presents information on the marine environment and conservation values (protected species, protected places and key ecological features) of the South-west Marine Region. The draft South-west Plan sets broad objectives for conservation; identifies priorities and outlines strategies and actions to achieve them. Specific advice on environmental assessments and referrals to assist people who wish to undertake activities that may impact on the marine environment in Commonwealth waters and other matters of national environmental significance is also presented in the draft Plan.

2) The **South-west Commonwealth Marine Network Proposal** comprises eight proposed marine reserves, 5 in Western Australia. The zoning for these proposed marine reserves includes General Use, Special Purpose and Sanctuary Zones.



Recfishwest believes that the Commonwealth Government has taken a mostly balanced and pragmatic approach and has not been swayed by an environmental lobby that has taken an anti-fishing approach to their marine conservation campaign. Despite this, Recfishwest has some concerns about potential impacts to recreational fishing near Margaret River, Windy Harbour and Esperance. In these areas sanctuary zones are proposed for waters on the continental shelf. Recfishwest will be holding direct discussion with local fishers about those zones in particular.

The first step in the consultation process will be undertaken over the next few weeks as representatives from the Commonwealth Government will be visiting major coastal towns in the region during to provide information about the draft plan and proposed marine reserves.

Recfishwest urges local recreational fishers to attend these open days.

The table below outlines the proposed dates, times and venues for the regional open days. You are welcome to stop by at any time between the hours of 4pm - 7.30pm to speak with departmental staff who will be there to provide information and answer questions.

Geraldton	Thursday 19 May	Queen's Park Theatre	4pm-7.30pm
Jurien Bay	Monday 23 May	Family Resource Centre	4pm-7.30pm
Bunbury	Thursday 26 May	Bunbury Regional Art Galleries	4pm-7.30pm
Margaret River	Monday 30 May	Margaret River Community Resource Centre	4pm-7.30pm
Albany	Thursday 2 June	Town Hall (Lesser Hall)	4pm-7.30pm
Esperance	Monday 6 June	Civic Centre	4pm-7.30pm

The public comment period closes 8 August 2011.

More information including maps of the marine reserves is available on the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities website

<http://www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/south-west/consultation/index.html>

Should you have any concerns about how the Draft South-west Marine Plan and Reserves Network may affect your fishing, please contact Recfishwest on 9246 3366.

*Fish today for tomorrow*

*[www.recfishwest.org.au](http://www.recfishwest.org.au)*