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Press release from the National Marine Science Committee

## Australia's Oceans 11 – marine science priorities to enable the blue economy and Australia's economic recovery

The future of marine science in Australia, and its recent achievements, has been laid out in a [new report](#) by the country's leading marine and coastal research organisations.

Today, the National Marine Science Committee (NMSC) released its report *The Midway Point*, a detailed look at the sector's progress in achieving eight recommendations first described in the *National Marine Science Plan 2015 – 2025*, released six years ago. The report introduces three new recommendations.

Toni Moate, Chair of the NMSC, said that increasing pressures on our marine environment and new emerging priorities have driven the need to produce the report which provides a roadmap for how marine science can contribute to a prosperous and healthy blue economy.

*"The Midway Report* makes it clear that sustainable management of Australia's marine estate is essential for future proofing the health of our oceans, coasts, economy and people," said Ms Moate.

"This review of Australia's marine science priorities arrives at a crucial time for collaboration and progress in marine sciences given this year's commencement of the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#) and the Australian Government's commitments through the [High Level Panel](#) for a Sustainable Ocean Economy"

"Our report reflects the discipline and ambition of Australia's marine science community, and our commitment to collaborate at a scale large enough to tackle the most pressing challenges facing ocean and coastal ecosystems," said Ms Moate.

"With a strong blue economy, we can chart a course through the uncertainties of the future and create long-term prosperity of all Australians," said Ms Moate.

Kim Picard, Deputy Chair of NMSC, said that the report brings our attention to success stories from marine science and the blue economy that demonstrate the advances of the research community that have better prepared Australia to apply its science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and Traditional-knowledge capabilities to tackle threats to our oceans and coasts.

"Our report celebrates the achievements of marine scientists and science organisations in driving evidence-based sustainable growth of the blue economy and identifies priorities for the future of marine science," said Ms Picard.

"Examples of success include the establishment of the Blue Economy CRC, funding of national research vessels and the expansion of the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS).

"The Report calls on all sectors of society to play their part in the development of Australia's blue economy through a series of actions, like the development of truly national research programs, industry science collaborations, post-Covid investment in science, and sharing responsibility for the long-term health of our oceans and coasts," said Picard.

The *National Marine Science Plan 2015-2025: The Midway Point* can be accessed at [www.marinescience.net.au/midway](http://www.marinescience.net.au/midway)

## NMSC recommendations and progress

#	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS
1	Create an explicit focus on the blue economy throughout the marine science system.	Underway
2	Establish and support a national marine baseline and long-term monitoring program to develop a comprehensive assessment of our estate and help inform management of Commonwealth and State Marine Parks.	Underway
3	Facilitate coordinated national studies on marine system processes and resilience to enable understanding of the impacts of development and climate change on our marine estate.	Underway
4	Create a national oceanographic modelling system to provide the accurate, detailed data and predictions of ocean state that are required by defence, industry and government.	Early stage
5	Develop a dedicated and coordinated science program to support decision-making by policy-makers and industry.	Early stage
6	Sustain and expand IMOS to support critical climate change and coastal systems research that includes coverage of key estuarine systems.	Mature
7	Develop marine science research training that is more quantitative, cross-disciplinary and congruent with the needs of industry and government.	Underway
8	Fund national research vessels for full use.	Mature
9	Develop a nationally coordinated approach to integrate the knowledge, rights, capability and aspirations of Traditional Owners into conventional marine science.	New recommendations published in <i>The Midway Point</i> .
10	Establish national policy guidelines for open access to government-funded or regulatory data, provide historical dataset access, and expand the Australian Ocean Data Network (AODN).	
11	Develop a coastal resilience-building approach firmly based in the proactive use of our natural environment.	

### About the National Marine Science Committee

The National Marine Science Committee is an advisory body linking high quality marine science and the sustainable growth and development of Australia's blue economy. The Committee assists coordination and information-sharing between Australia's research institutions, universities, Commonwealth and State/Territory governments, and the broader Australian marine science community.

The NMSC acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Elders of the land and sea on which we work and observe and recognise their unique connection to land and sea. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and future.

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