

Assessment of Victoria's Coastal Reserves

Fact Sheet

February 2019



In June 2018 the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change requested the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) to conduct an assessment of Victoria's coastal reserves.

Aim of the assessment

The aim of the assessment is to assist the Victorian government's future planning and decision-making for Victoria's coasts and support the government's marine and coastal reforms. The assessment and associated inventory will provide information on the extent and types of coastal reserves, existing uses and values, including values at risk from the impacts of climate change.

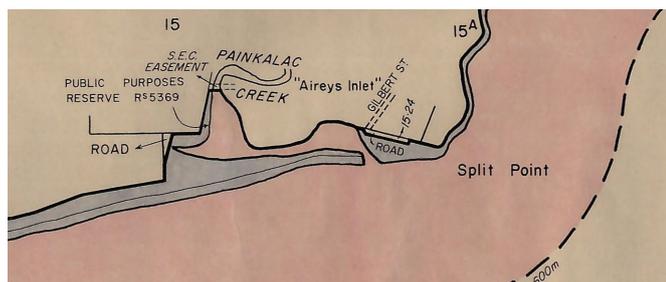
The assessment is not intended to recommend changes to current uses of coastal reserves.

The specific purposes of the assessment are to:

- review the number and types (reservation status) of coastal reserves in Victoria
- identify reserves with high environmental, cultural heritage, social and economic values and identify values at risk from the impacts of climate change
- identify current and emerging uses of the coastal reserves, and
- compile an inventory, including spatial distribution, of values and uses of the coastal reserves.

The Council is required to publish a definition of coastal reserves to be used in the assessment and to produce a draft report and seek public comments on it.

The Council must report on the completed assessment by 6 December 2019.



What is the consultation process?

Stakeholder consultation is a key part of VEAC's work, tailored to the nature and specific requirements of each investigation or assessment. For this assessment, the consultation process will include regular provision of information for interested organisations and individuals, targeted stakeholder consultation on technical information, and one formal submission period on the draft report.



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What is VEAC?

VEAC provides the Victorian government with independent and strategic advice on matters related to the protection and management of the environment and natural resources of public land. It was established under the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*.

VEAC carries out its investigations and assessments and provides advice at the request of the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change. Together the Act and terms of reference provided by the Minister describe how an investigation or assessment must be conducted, including the number of reports to be prepared, matters to be taken into account, timeframes and public consultation.

VEAC is a five-person council appointed by the Victorian government. The members are Ms Janine Haddow (Chairperson), Ms Joanne Duncan, Ms Anna Kilborn, Dr Charles Meredith and Dr Geoffrey Wescott.

What is an assessment?

The *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001* was amended in 2016 to allow the Minister to request the Council to conduct an assessment or provide advice in relation to a matter that, in the opinion of the Minister, does not require an investigation, having regard to the matter's limited scale or scope or its technical nature. This assessment of Victoria's coastal reserves is requested pursuant to the new section 26B of the Act.

Terms of Reference

Pursuant to section 26B of the *Victorian Environmental Assessment Council Act 2001*, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change hereby requests the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (the Council) to carry out an assessment of Victoria's coastal reserves¹.

The purpose of the assessment is to:

- review the number and types (reservation status) of coastal reserves in Victoria;
- identify reserves with high environmental, cultural heritage, social and economic values and identify values at risk from the impacts of climate change;
- identify current and emerging uses of the coastal reserves; and
- compile an inventory, including spatial distribution, of values and uses of the coastal reserves.

As a first step, the Council is required to publish a definition of coastal reserves to be used in the assessment, including a diagrammatic representation and map of Victoria's coastal reserves.

The assessment and associated inventory will assist the Victorian Government's future planning and decision-making for Victoria's coasts.

The Council must take into account relevant agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*.

As part of the assessment, the Council must produce a draft report and seek public comment on it.

The Council must report on the completed assessment by 6 December 2019.

¹ For the purposes of this assessment, Victoria's coastal reserves include any Crown land along Victoria's coast (including the coast of any bay, inlet and estuary and the Gippsland Lakes) that is:

- reserved under section 4(1)(ze) of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for the protection of the coastline or is otherwise reserved under that Act and is landward of low water mark; or
- unreserved Crown land under the *Land Act 1958* that is landward of low water mark.

For clarity, Victoria's coastal reserves do not include any Crown land described as a park or marine sanctuary in Schedule 2, 2B, 3, 4, 7 or 8 to the *National Parks Act 1975* or any unreserved Crown land from low water mark to the outer limit of Victoria's coastal waters (mostly 3 nautical miles).

Contact details

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How can I keep up to date?

To keep informed about the progress of the assessment, check the VEAC website for updates, like us on Facebook or register your interest by filling in the form on the VEAC website, sending an email or phoning VEAC.

We will email or post out bulletins during the assessment to inform you of progress and next steps.