North Coast communities to have a say on Draft Marine Based Industry Policy

A boost to investment and jobs in marine-based industries stretching from Tea Gardens to the Queensland border forms the basis of a draft planning policy.

The Draft Marine Based Industry policy, which is now on public exhibition, will provide greater certainty for investment in marine-based industries - such as boat building, refit and repairs and other specialist marine industries – to create jobs and promote economic growth across the region.

The draft policy also protects the high environmental values of the coastal estuaries, many of which have national parks, marine and other recreational reserves within their catchments.

The department’s Director-General, Sam Haddad, said the draft policy provided an environmental and policy blueprint for councils and investors.

The draft policy outlines 13 criteria to ensure that sites are appropriately located to minimise the impacts on the environment, water quality and visual amenity.

Across the state, more than 2000 people are currently directly employed in ship and boatbuilding repair and services.

The draft policy specifically requires that any new business must be dependent on access to a navigable waterway - for instance, the proposed business will be engaged in building ships or large boats which need to be floated to their market.

The department’s Director-General Sam Haddad said councils and government agencies had worked together to develop the policy which covers the Far North Coast and Mid North Coast.

“I urge everyone who lives in coastal communities, from Tea Gardens in the Great Lakes and north to the Tweed, to have a look at this draft plan and provide their feedback,” Mr Haddad said.

The policy covers a number of North Coast waterways including the more navigable waterways of the Tweed River, Richmond River, Clarence River, Hastings River and Coffs Harbour.

“If adopted, the policy will supplement the Far North Coast and Mid North Coast regional strategies to guide industry to the right precincts and waterways and highlight the issues that need to be addressed,” Mr Haddad said.

The draft policy aims to ensure:
- Greater certainty for investment in marine-based industry within the region
- Industry is appropriately located
Biodiversity, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage, commercial fisheries and recreational fisheries are protected

Hazards associated with flooding, bank erosion, climate change and acid sulphate soils are taken into account

The Draft Marine-Based Industry Policy is being publicly exhibited by the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure from 17 April to 17 June 2013.

The draft document can be viewed on the department’s website at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/onexhibition or at the department’s Grafton, Newcastle and Sydney offices.

Any person wishing to make a submission should use the online form, which is available from the exhibition link above. If you cannot lodge your submission online, you can write to the Department of Planning & Infrastructure, Locked Bag 9022, Grafton NSW 2460.

All submissions received will be made public in line with the department’s objective to promote an open and transparent planning system. Before making a submission, please read our privacy statement at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/privacy or call 1300 305 695 to obtain a copy.

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