



PROJECT 6.1: COMMUNITY VALUES FOR CHANGES IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

What is the project about?

Cockburn Sound's marine environment is important to a wide range of stakeholders. This project provides an opportunity to quantify the diverse values that are held by the public towards environmental changes in Cockburn Sound.

Through a survey of the broader Perth community, this project will:

- 1) Understand what marine environmental values within Cockburn Sound are important to the Perth community;
- 2) Understand how the proposed Westport development might impact on those values, positively or negatively;
- 3) Report those values in monetary terms.

This project is being developed by a team of researchers from The University of Western Australia and Edith Cowan University.

What are the benefits of this project?

We recognise that the condition of Cockburn Sound's environment may be valued by those who live nearby or who visit the area for recreation. However, it might also be important to other people in Perth, even if they do not visit the area.

By surveying a representative sample of Perth residents, we will capture the values of both users and non-users of Cockburn Sound. This will help provide a holistic understanding of the community values related to potential changes to Cockburn Sound's environment.

We will consider a range of possible changes to the marine environment, including potential impacts from new development and outcomes from potential environmental enhancement projects.

Given the possible diversity of values and opinions, the project will use a variety of methods to identify the range of values held by stakeholders.

One of the approaches will identify the community's "willingness to pay" for potential environmental outcomes. This does not mean that the community has to handover money, but rather that they are asked to indicate how much the outcomes would be worth relative to other things that they already do pay for, providing a monetary-equivalent measure of value. These monetary values could then be compared with the costs of different environmental projects or mitigation actions to identify proposals that could benefit the community.

How is the project being developed?

Step 1 Reviewing potential impacts

- Researchers review publicly available documents, and consult with marine science experts to understand the potential impacts a development or enhancement project could have on the environment of the Sound.
- Community focus groups: Researchers will meet with community members to explore their understanding of the potential environmental changes that could occur in Cockburn Sound.

Step 2 Online survey

Recruit a representative sample of Perth residents ' to complete an online survey consisting of:

- 1) Basic demographic information.
- 2) Identifying perceptions and values towards the environmental assets
- 3) Asking respondents to make trade-offs across different outcomes for environmental assets

Step 3 Data Analysis

Researchers will report the range of perceptions and values held by the community, and analyse what may govern differences in those values. They will also quantify the effects of changes to environmental assets in monetary terms.

Need more information?

You can contact the project team at socialvalues@wamsi.org.au to learn more about Project 6.1.

For further information about the Westport Program, please visit www.westport.wa.gov.au or contact enquiries@westport.wa.gov.au

Project Partners

