



**Gareth Ward**

Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast

Member for Kiama

**Shelley Hancock**

Speaker of the NSW Legislative Assembly

Member for South Coast

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*\*Photo and grab attached*

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# **20-YEAR STRATEGY TO ATTRACT WAVES OF VISITORS TO SOUTH COAST**

Parliamentary Secretary for the South Coast and Member for Kiama Gareth Ward MP and Member for South Coast Shelley Hancock MP have today announced that snorkelers, boaters and nature-lovers from across the globe are set to make the NSW South Coast their next must visit travel destination, with plans to expand offerings and shine a spotlight on local marine tourism experiences, events and attractions.

Mr Ward and Mrs Hancock have today launched the 20-year *NSW South Coast Marine Tourism Strategy* at Moorhouse Park in Nowra.

Mr Ward said that the strategy would help local, State and Commonwealth Governments work together with the tourism industry to unlock the full potential of the region's unique offerings, such as whale watching cruises and surf schools.

"Ten million people visited the South Coast in 2017 and, given those numbers are set to surge to 14 million by 2030, we need to ensure the region is ready to receive the influx of tourists and reap the rewards of those extra tourism dollars," he said.

"This strategy also includes an action plan that will showcase the South Coast to new markets, activate foreshore precincts and harbours, develop a cruise boating and voyaging network and create new and improved tourism experiences.

"I promised coastal communities they would get the support they need to promote the natural beauty of their regions and this strategy proves the NSW Government is delivering for regional NSW, making it a premier tourist destination of choice.

"Research shows that Sydneysiders, Canberrans and Victorians are familiar with Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega's boating, beaches, adventure, culture and culinary delights, but those wonders remain somewhat of a secret to overseas tourists.

"This strategy will build on opportunities created by Shell Cove's new 270-berth Shellharbour Marina and the NSW Government's \$44 million investment to extend the

Port of Eden Breakwater Wharf,” Mr Ward said.

Mrs Hancock said that the NSW Government will also be working with local government to improve existing programs and exploring potential new tourist activities and events to ensure memorable experiences that boost the likelihood of return visits and accommodate larger visitor numbers.

“The South Coast has pristine, breathtaking coastlines, adventure activities that excite and delight and cultural experiences that enthrall and inspire, and this strategy and action plan will encourage Australians and the world to add the South Coast to their bucket list,” she said.

“Further investment in marine infrastructure is an option we may consider to help take South Coast attractions to the next level, and with our record level of investment in regional NSW, there’s still more to come.

“Pop up businesses and adaptive reuse of lighthouses as attractions are examples of how governments could work together to activate foreshore and harbour precincts that encourage tourism outside of peak times.

“Exciting new foreshore events, attractions and experiences would provide cruise ship guests with great day visit options year round, expanding local offerings, creating jobs and helping us address the tourism challenge of seasonality.

“Delivery of the strategy will commence immediately, with initial meetings being held this month and a framework already being established to track progress,” Mrs Hancock said.

The Strategy was developed in partnership with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla and Bega Councils and delivery is set to commence immediately.

To view the NSW South Coast Marine Tourism Strategy, please visit the website at: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/regional-nsw/>.

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