



BASS
COAST



MORNINGTON
PENINSULA
Shire

OUR COASTS

Mornington Peninsula Shire & Bass Coast Shire Joint Coastal Management Advocacy

What we are asking

The Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast Shire have 383km of coastline, of which the councils manage 104km. Help us better manage our coastlines, build resilience to climate change and ensure our community and visitors can continue to enjoy our beaches and piers. We seek to work together with the Victorian Government and request:

- on-going investment commitment to prevent coastal erosion and support our state significant tourism economies, including land reforms, hazard assessments and erosion protection.
- higher profile communications from the Victorian Government to our communities, raising awareness that coastlines are changing due to coastal erosion and climate change.
- as key coastal stakeholders, both councils will support DEECA with the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Policy and Strategy. The

Victorian Resilience Coast program provided opportunities to manage coastal adaptation – we are seeking long term, ongoing commitments to address this huge challenge.

What makes us unique

Together the Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast account for 20% of Victoria's mainland coastline – that is one fifth of Victoria's coast within just 2 of 79 council areas across the state.

Our natural environments and stunning coasts are the envy of the world and we host unique visitor experiences, such as the Phillip Island Penguin Parade, wineries and National Parks. Our 48 coastal towns have many beaches, tourist attractions and community amenities, including 22 public boat ramps and 20 jetties. This highlights the attraction of our coastline and surrounding marine environment to domestic and international visitors, upon which our local economies depend.

KEY POINTS

- The Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast account for 20% of Victoria's coastline
- Our local economies depend on the coastline
- Our 48 coastal towns face greater risks from climate change impacts
- Damage to piers, jetties and coastal access is threatening community safety
- Our beaches and coastal amenities require costly maintenance



Pictured top: Erosion at Cowes East, Bass Coast
Pictured above: Erosion at Mount Martha North beach, Mornington Peninsula

In *2018-19, our combined contribution (\$871 million) to tourism Gross Regional Product accounted for 18% of regional Victoria's total (\$4.9 billion). High visitation and public use of our beaches puts significant pressure on our coastlines and there is strong community expectation for continued safe access to our coastal infrastructure.

Why this is important

The Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast are on the front line of climate change, with a higher proportion of our population, community infrastructure and public open spaces in coastal locations.

As the impacts of climate change increase, the significance of coastal erosion on our local towns and marine infrastructure is proportionately greater and results in higher financial and management costs than in other municipalities.

Our Councils urgently need to be supported by the Victorian Government, to manage immediate risks and plan strategically for the future of our changing coasts.

We need to plan and be ready for the significant impact of expected sea level rises associated with climate change, as well as increased storm surges and more intense rainfall events, to limit damage to our coastal assets. For example, the release of Port Phillip Bay's Coastal Hazard Assessment will provide critical support for the Mornington Peninsula Shire to plan for future coastal erosion.

The Victorian Government is shifting coastal adaptation costs and responsibilities to councils – increasing the pressure on us to act with limited financial support and no long-term resourcing commitments.

The Benefits – Supporting Evidence and Strategies

In *2018-19, together our municipalities were among those with the greatest proportion of direct Gross Value Added attributable to international overnight visitors (both 18%) and domestic visitors (both 82%) to Victoria. Phillip Island has the greatest reliance in regional Victoria on tourism for direct employment (35%), with 7 per cent of direct employment across the Mornington Peninsula reliant on the tourism sector.

Recent landslips in Mount Martha have significantly affected residents and caused road closures. Smaller scale slips after heavy rain have caused cliff collapses and path closures in Mornington, Mount Eliza and Flinders.

Significant amounts of coast have been wiped off the map by coastal erosion at Inverloch. The sea has advanced up to 70 metres inland in just 10 years, which has caused buildings and roads to be at risk. Cowes, on Phillip Island has suffered significant erosion, including pedestrian access along the beach and nearby open spaces. Without intervention from Council and partner agencies, including beach renourishment, assets at Inverloch and Cowes would have been lost.

There is strong community support for both Council's advocacy from Flinders Community Association, Coastal Advisory Groups and boating, fishing, and diving communities across the Mornington Peninsula and South Gippsland Conservation Society, Inverloch Tourism Association and Cowes East Foreshore Preventative Action Group in Bass Coast.

Our advocacy also aligns with priorities of the South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA), which call for sufficient levels of financial support for councils and communities to adapt to climate impacts.

Alignment to Council Plans

Theme 1 of both Council Plans focuses on protection of a healthy natural environment and well-planned towns. Piers and jetties provide a central role for the natural environment and coastal towns of both the Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast, as outlined above.



Pictured: Unstable cliff due to erosion at Mount Martha North beach, Mornington Peninsula



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