



Media Release

8 August 2024

Drive for sustainable blue economy galvanizes partnership between City and UWA

The City of Cockburn and The University of Western Australia (UWA) are collaborating to drive sustainable development of the local blue economy and the thriving business community that has grown up around it over several decades.

Located on a vibrant coastline, the City is an active leader in the blue economy, and has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UWA Oceans Institute (OI).

The Oceans Institute uses its multidisciplinary research strengths across oceanography, ecology and engineering to work with all levels of government, industry and business, research institutions and the community to achieve the sustainable use of ocean resources.

The MoU will support the development of ocean-related industries and infrastructure, education, training and research to support investment attraction and employment in the growing sector, positioning WA as a leader in the blue economy.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the MoU's collaborative framework would allow the exploration and development of opportunities resulting from marine research and innovation.

"The MoU will allow us to share knowledge and resources and pursue shared goals that will drive economic, technological and social impact in marine technology, offshore renewable energy and coastal resilience," Mayor Howlett said.

"With planning for the Cockburn Blue Maritime Technology Hub at the Australian Marine Complex in Henderson ongoing, formalising our partnership with UWA is a natural step toward building closer ties with research centres of excellence such as the Oceans Institute.

"We have been busy in this space for some time, installing a 135-module concrete reef off the coast at C.Y. O'Connor Beach in North Coojee in 2022.



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“This Australian first enables the City, in partnership with the UWA Oceans Graduate School, to conduct research to determine if modular reefs can reduce coastal erosion, not only here, but in other coastal locations around the nation.

“This reef and erosion-reduction trial will double in size later this year with the addition of more modules.

“We recognise the diversity of the blue economy in Cockburn. Our pristine coast is a tourism destination, a popular recreation spot for locals and visitors alike, and a sought-after residential choice. Our partnership with the Oceans Institute aims to maintain and grow the blue economy alongside our community.”

UWA Oceans Institute Director Professor Christophe Gaudin said the partnership with the City of Cockburn represented a significant step forward in advancing Western Australia's leadership in sustainable ocean industries.

“Our collaboration with the City is a vital opportunity to align cutting-edge marine research with community and industry needs,” Professor Gaudin said.

“By working together, we can ensure development of the blue economy not only drives economic growth but also preserves the environmental and social fabric that makes our coastline unique.

“The Oceans Institute is committed to fostering innovation and sustainability in ocean-related sectors.

“This partnership will allow us to engage directly with local businesses, government bodies, and the community to create impactful solutions in areas such as coastal management, renewable energy and marine conservation.

“As we look to the future, this MoU will enable us to build capacity in ocean science and technology, attract global expertise, and provide educational and employment opportunities that will benefit the region and the State.”

For more information about the blue economy in the City of Cockburn visit our [website](#). Learn about the UWA Oceans Institute at its [website](#).



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Caption: L-r City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett, City of Cockburn Director Planning and Sustainability, Western Australian Marine Science Institution Chief Executive Luke Twomey and UWA Oceans Institute Director Professor Christophe Gaudin commemorate the MoU at Port Coogee Marina.

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