

Great Australian Bight Alliance



Champions Toolkit

A guide to the campaign and
how you can help



Photo: Eliza Muirhead



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Great Australian Bight Campaign Information

Who are the Great Australian Bight Alliance?

After several years of independent campaign work on the ground, local community groups from Ceduna area and Kangaroo Island as well as The Wilderness Society South Australia began working collaboratively on the Great Australian Bight campaign. After several successful joint events such as Hands Across the Sand, Sea Shepherd Australia also began working with the groups.

In January 2016 the Great Australian Bight Alliance was launched by 6 founding groups committed to the protection of the Bight:

- Clean Bight Alliance Australia – West Coast SA (including members of the Kokatha Nation)
- Mirning Elders represented by songman & elder Bunna Lawrie
- Oil Free Seas Australia (Kangaroo Island)
- The Wilderness Society South Australia
- Sea Shepherd Australia
- Surfrider Foundation

In mid 2016, more organisations joined the Alliance alongside thousands of people:

- Sea Shepherd UK
- Australian Marine Conservation Society
- Bob Brown Foundation
- Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network
- Australian Youth Climate Coalition

There's now over 12,000 people who have signed the Statement of Concern and joined the Alliance.

Will you join us to fight for the Bight?





The Current Situation

On October 11th 2016, BP announced that [they were abandoning plans](#) to drill for oil in the Great Australian Bight. We view this as a responsible decision and pay credit to BP for their choice to leave the Bight. While this is a huge milestone in the campaign, it doesn't mean the fight for the Bight is over. Chevron, Statoil, Santos, Murphy Oil, Karoon and Bight Petroleum [still hold leases](#) in the Bight and could announce plans for drilling at any time. As recently as early October, Karoon Gas was awarded an exploration permit covering 17793 sq km, part of which runs through a Commonwealth Marine Reserve.

In attempts to gain approval for exploration drilling (which is when it all went wrong in the Gulf of Mexico) BP submitted an application for drilling, including an Environment Plan and Emergency Response Plan to the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA). BP have tried 3 times to have their application approved, but have [had it returned by NOPSEMA](#) each time – first back in October 2015 and a second in March 2016. NOPSEMA took over 30 days to respond to the first two, asking BP to provide more information. After the first two attempts were knocked back, BP created an entirely new application, but instead of the original 4 wells, they reduced their new plan to drilling only 2 wells. At this point, BP has two separate applications in play.

Two days before NOPSEMA were due to hand down a decision for the third time, BP finally released [their own oil spill modelling summary](#), which led to NOPSEMA asking BP to provide more information but this time giving BP a 1 month deadline. Within two weeks, BP announced that they were abandoning their plans.

A [Senate Inquiry](#) was called in February 2016 to shine a much-needed spotlight on oil companies plans to drill in the Bight. This inquiry was suspended due to the Federal election, but has now been reopened and accepted new submissions during October. The scope of the Senate Inquiry queries any kind of oil or gas exploration in the Bight, so is still of great relevance to the campaign. The Senate Inquiry Committee are due to report in March 2017.

The [cost of BP's disastrous Gulf of Mexico oil spill](#) is still continuing to emerge (the worst in history - devastating marine life, fisheries, tourism and local communities). Drilling in the Bight is a risk we just can't take. Through funds raised from the community, the Wilderness Society commissioned [independent oil spill modelling](#) in 2015 – the results are shocking. The modelling demonstrates the scope of devastation should an oil spill occur in the Bight.

We cannot let big oil companies put the Great Australian Bight and the entire southern coastline at risk. The Bight is one of the most pristine marine wilderness areas left on earth. It supports a significant whale nursery, is a sanctuary for a myriad of endangered and threatened marine life; and is recognised internationally for its ecological significance. **We need to keep up pressure on the government to rescind all current exploration leases and protect this unique wilderness forever.** This is no time to be digging up more fossil fuels – we need a just and rapid transition to renewable energy and to meet our global obligations through a long-term vision for ensuring a liveable climate.



Campaign Context

About the Bight

The Great Australian Bight is a place of unparalleled natural beauty and considered to be one of the most pristine marine environments on earth. The coastal span of the Bight - over 1200 kms - has supported many different Aboriginal groups for tens of thousands of years, with connection to country still remaining strong today. The Bunda cliffs and plains of the coastal Nullarbor are home to the Mirning People - the whale dreamers. Visiting the Head of Bight to whale watch has been named as one of the top 3 experiences in South Australia by [In Daily](#) alongside a string of other coastal tourist attractions.

Marine Wildlife

Over 85% of the species in southern Australia's waters are found nowhere else in the world, and just in the past year [over 60 new species were discovered in the Bight](#). A sanctuary recognised internationally for its amazing array of marine life, the rugged coastline of the Bight is home to many threatened and endangered species: humpback, blue and southern right whales, great white sharks, southern blue-fin tuna, Australian sea lions, white-bellied sea eagles and albatross.

The Head of the Bight is best known for one of the largest breeding populations of endangered southern right whales. These magnificent creatures make the yearly migration from the waters of Antarctica to rest, breed and give birth. Hunted almost to extinction in the 1800s but now protected in Australia, the population is still recovering. Over 200 were observed along this stretch of coastline in 2014, mostly mothers and calves.



Our vision

Our vision for the Great Australian Bight is for a protected marine environment, where marine life is safe and healthy. Our unspoiled waters must be valued and celebrated. Oil spills are forever. We cannot accept the risk of catastrophic oil spills in our waters and along our coastline.

Together, we can save the Bight from these risks.



The Risks

Big oil's shocking environmental track record

BP's 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil blowout in the Gulf of Mexico was the worst in history. 11 workers lost their lives. Oil poured into the sea for 87 days, releasing approximately 4.9 million barrels of oil. This was in one of the world's most highly developed oil fields, with all of the emergency infrastructure right at their doorstep. Marine life, fisheries, tourism and local communities were devastated. The costs continue to emerge. Not that this was a one-off event, there have been hundreds of other pipeline blowouts and explosions all over the world for decades.

Now, big oil companies want to bring these risks to the Great Australian Bight. Based on the limited information that has been released so far, an oil-well blowout here could be much worse than the Gulf of Mexico. In part of their original documents, BP publicly admitted that it could take in the order of 150 days to "...effectively kill the well and allow for it to be permanently closed down" (from BP's BP GAB Exploration Drilling Program Stromlo-1 and Whinham-1 Oil Spill Response Planning Strategic Overview, 9 September 2016, which has since been removed from their website.) Oil could flow for months into the Great Australian Bight, polluting the waters of southern Australia.

The oil industry have claimed that drilling has already been done in the Bight Basin over the years, but none of the [few attempts](#) that have taken place have been successful or have occurred in the depths they are now proposing. The most recent attempt was by Woodside Petroleum, but due to extreme weather conditions which caused the drill bit to snap, the project was abandoned. This was at around half of the depth that BP were proposing to drill, which puts in question the safety of all deep-sea drilling operations in the Bight.

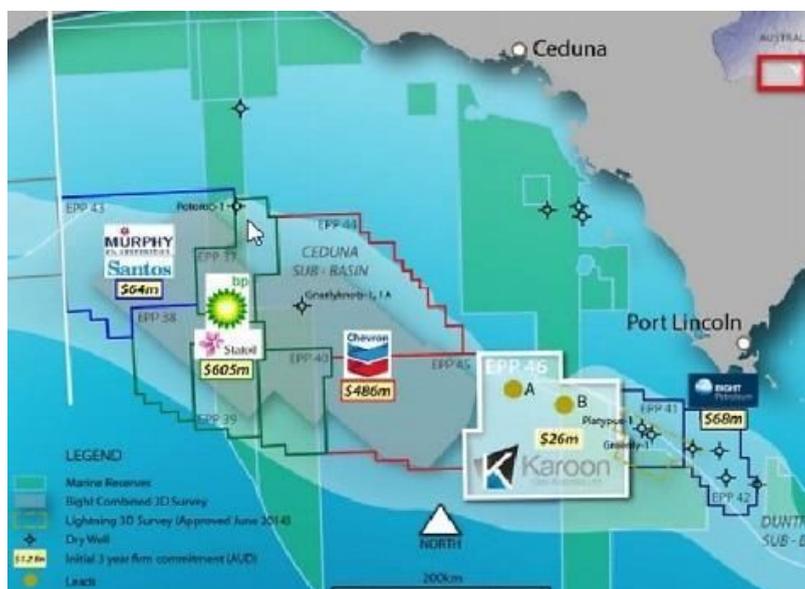


Image: Karoon Gas

Independent oil spill modelling

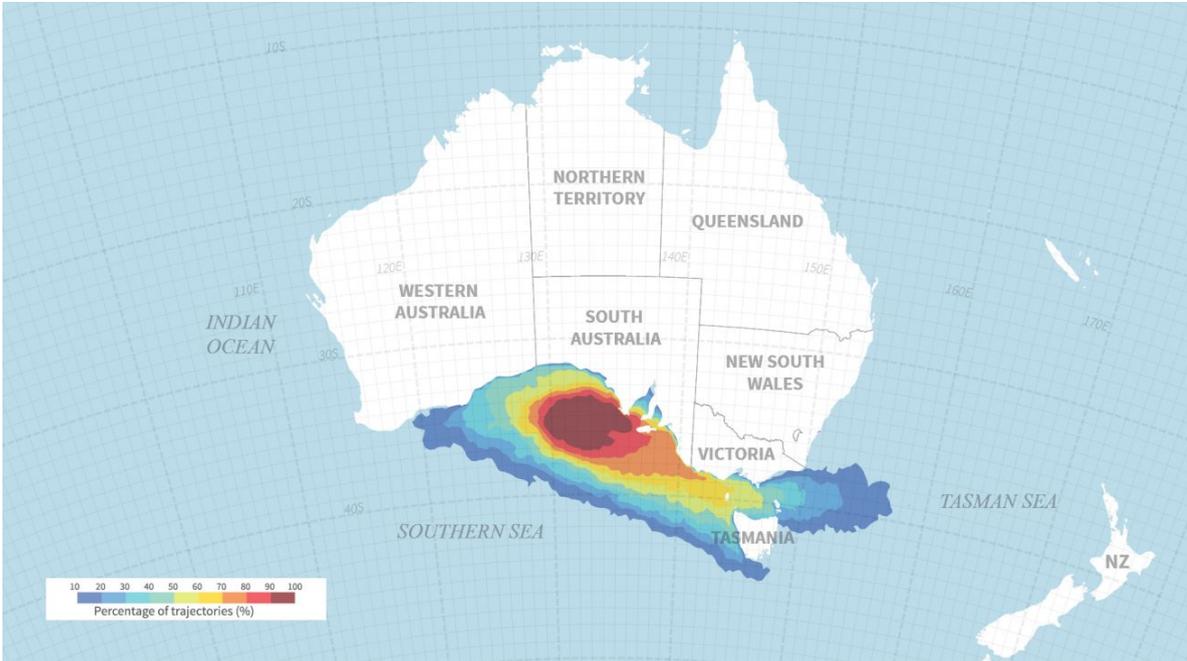
The Wilderness Society commissioned [independent oil spill modelling](#) that shows that an oil spill in the Great Australian Bight would be devastating for South Australia's \$442 million fishing industry and its tourism industry in coastal regions, worth over \$1 billion. The two industries employ over 10,000 full-time positions.



Great Australian Bight Alliance

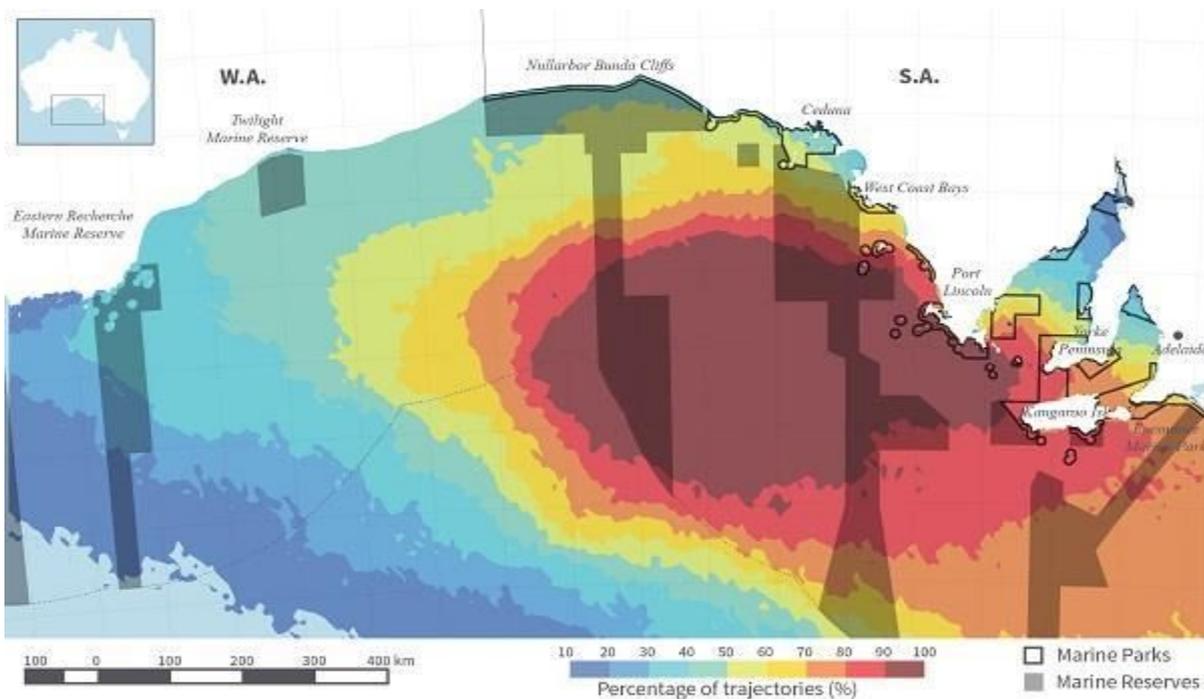
fightforthebight.org.au

Oil spill modelling maps



Winter scenario map - 120 days

Fishery closures probability for four months after low-flow 87-day spill in winter (oiling over 0.01g/m²). An area of roughly 265,000km² would have an 80% chance of being affected.



From: Stochastic analysis of deep sea oil spill trajectories in the Great Australian Bight, Lebreton, LCM, October 2015. Commissioned by The Wilderness Society South Australia

The oil spill trajectory maps are an indication of what is possible. On the Eyre Peninsula, an oil spill could have a massive impact on the fishing & tourism industries with tourism contributing approximately \$293 million and 1500 jobs alone.



Great Australian Bight Alliance

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Research recently published in the scientific journal [Nature](#) indicates that to have a 50% chance of avoiding more than 2 degrees Celsius of warming, almost half of the known oil reserves in Australia's "OECD Pacific" region need to stay in the ground (Nature, 2015: *The geographical distribution of fossil fuels unused when limiting global warming to 2 °C*). 2015 has been announced as the [world's hottest year on record](#), and eight of Australia's ten warmest years on record have occurred since 2002 (Global Meteorological Organisation, 2016 *Global climate breaks new records January to June 2016*).

Our planet can't afford this, Southern Australia can't afford this...it's just too risky.

Quick Campaign Snapshot

The proposal to drill the Great Australian Bight has sparked widespread and determined opposition. Over the past few years, local groups have been working to build a strong community campaign to protect the Great Australian Bight.

Here's an outline of what we've achieved in the campaign so far

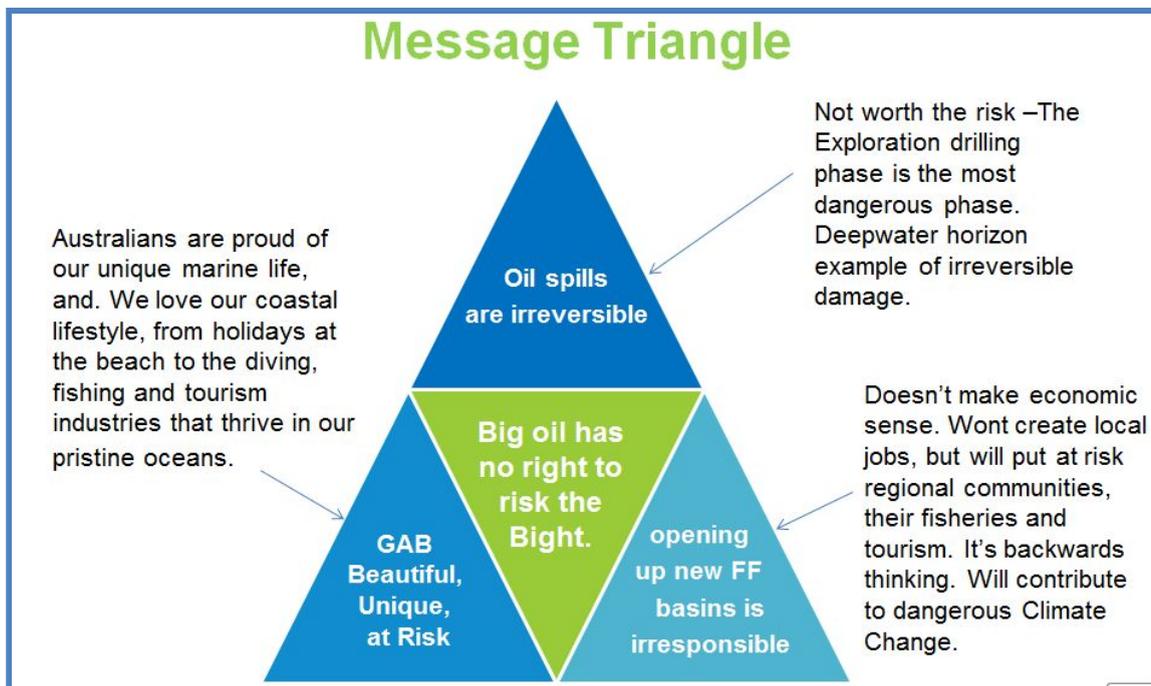
- We've been working in urban and regional areas to raise public awareness about the drilling risks proposed in the Bight
- As BP refused to make its worst-case oil spill modelling or oil pollution emergency plan public for consultation, we've consistently kept up pressure on the oil major as well as industry regulator NOPSEMA to release this critical information to the public.
- In 2015 The Wilderness Society SA commissioned peer-reviewed oil spill modelling that shows the potential devastating impact across southern Australia. BP eventually released their oil spill modelling summary at the last moment, which proved our modelling to be conservative.
- In January 2016 we helped launch the Great Australian Bight Alliance, teaming up with other national and community based organisations to strengthen our joint opposition to drilling in the Bight.
- We've gathered support through petitions and the "Statement of Concern", from communities across southern Australia and beyond to protect our coasts & oceans by keeping the Great Australian Bight oil rig free. We have over 40,000 signatures on The Wilderness Society's petition "Whales and oil don't mix".
- We held an educational tour of the Great Australian Bight on the "Steve Irwin" – Sea Shepherd's flagship vessel, and gathered stunning imagery of the pristine marine environment to showcase the area to the rest of the world.
- We are calling on governments & NOPSEMA to reject proposals from companies to drill for oil & gas in the Great Australian Bight, and for companies to follow BP's lead and abandon their plans.

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT TO PROTECT THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT



Campaign Communications

The campaign to protect Southern Australia’s coastlines from dangerous deep-sea oil and gas drilling focused strongly on British Petroleum (BP), as they were a front-runner in the application process as well as a “super-major” oil company with a shocking environmental record. With BP looking for approval from NOPSEMA to drill in the Bight in late 2016, it was crucial to remember that this is when it all went wrong in the [Gulf of Mexico](#) - the worst oil disaster in history. Our campaign messaging targeted them, sending a strong message that they weren’t welcome in the Great Australian Bight by local communities. Now that BP has gone, our focus remains on the other companies with leases in the Bight and our task ahead is to invite them to follow BP’s lead by leaving the Bight, and to secure permanent protection for the Bight from frontier fossil fuel exploration.





Key Messages

Big oil has no right to risk – We will fight for the Bight (Main Message)

In an area as incredible as the Great Australian Bight, there is no way that oil companies should be given the right to risk this internationally significant place. We will stand together and show that there is no social licence for oil companies to drill in our Great Australian Bight.



Great Australian Bight: Unique. Pristine. At Risk. (Nature in Danger)

“Our Great Australian Bight is considered to be one of the most pristine marine environments on earth...a sanctuary, recognised internationally for its amazing animals including southern right whales and their calves, blue and humpback whales and Australian sea lions. Right now, it’s all at risk...”



OIL SPILLS ARE IRREVERSIBLE! (Community Impact)

Australians love our coastline – we depend on it for our way of life; from our food sources to recreation, to the massive fishing & tourism industries. The negative impacts of altering our pristine marine ecosystems would be felt across the state and beyond. We can’t afford to risk it all for multinational companies gain.



Opening up new Fossil Fuel basins is dangerous and irresponsible

(Fossil Fuels & Climate Change)

Big oil companies want to start high-risk deep sea drilling in the pristine waters of the Great Australian Bight. Increasing oil and gas drilling activities are a threat to our climate and put our commitments to the Paris agreement at risk.

The real risk of any operation is **likelihood x consequence**.

Independent oil spill modelling shows the real potential damage, and it’s terrifying. The Federal Government are doing almost nothing to battle climate change nor to protect the Bight ... **we must act**.





Media Archives

For more campaign background - check out these articles:

Great Australian Bight Campaign:

http://www.fightforthebight.org.au/about_the_campaign

Independent Oil spill modelling:

<https://www.wilderness.org.au/articles/bp-great-australian-bight-oil-spill-could-impact-all-southern-australia%E2%80%99s-coast>

Daily Telegraph Article – New species found by Great Australian Bight Research Program (Oct 2016)

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/new-species-found-by-great-australian-bight-research-program/news-story/c94ec86847409e07dddbe7eb51a3bf9b>

Advertiser Article – “BP pulls the plug on its controversial \$14 billion Great Australian Bight oil drilling project” (Oct 2016)

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/business/bp-has-pulled-the-plug-on-its-controversial-14-billion-great-australian-bight-oil-drilling-project/news-story/403881c745e84fc46f478026c2002398>

Sunday Mail Article – Our clean, green wonderland – “The Great Australian Bight is not worth risking in the quest for oil and gas” (August 2016)

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/opinion/lainie-anderson-our-clean-green-wonderland-the-great-australian-bight-is-not-worth-risking-in-the-quest-for-oil-and-gas/news-story/42f730fa4d011b2dfcaa662727fda6e>

ABC article “BP 'showing contempt' for public by moving forward with drilling plans” (March 2016)

<http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2016/s4419008.htm>

ABC – “BP resubmit drilling plan for GAB to NOPSEMA” (March 2016)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-03-17/bp-re-submits-drilling-plan-for-great-australian-bight/7253196>

InDaily article - Head of Bight to whale watch – one of the top 3 experiences in South Australia (January 2016)

<http://indaily.com.au/travel/2016/01/28/south-australias-bucket-list-experiences/>

The Guardian Australia article – “What BP’s offshore oil drilling plan means for the Great Australian Bight” with interactive graphics (May 2015)

<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/ng-interactive/2015/may/25/what-bps-offshore-oil-drilling-plan-means-for-the-great-australian-bight>

The Guardian Australia article with interactive graphics:

<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/ng-interactive/2015/may/25/what-bps-offshore-oil-drilling-plan-means-for-the-great-australian-bight>



What you can do?

First Steps

The Great Australian Bight is under threat – this beautiful region, its endangered species and vulnerable communities need our voices to protect them. We cannot let big oil put the Great Australian Bight at risk. The potential effects of an oil spill, as well as industrialisation of a pristine area are far reaching, so we need to make sure as many people as possible know about the campaign so that they can join the conversation.

There are a great many things you can do to help protect the Bight, here are just a few.

Join the Great Australian Bight Alliance

This is the first step – join thousands of people in saying no to BIG OIL in the Great Australian Bight.

- Join the Alliance by signing the ‘Statement of Concern’ on the Great Australian Bight Alliance website: www.fightforthebight.org.au
- Share the website via email, facebook and twitter so that we can grow the Alliance.
- Follow the “[Great Australian Bight Alliance](#)” on facebook for updates



Follow Alliance partner organisations on facebook

Look up the following organisations on facebook and click “like” to keep up to date on how to protect our coasts and oceans. Share information, images and news stories to help us reach more people.

- [The Wilderness Society South Australia](#) & [The Wilderness Society Australia](#)
- [Sea Shepherd South Australia](#) & [Sea Shepherd Australia](#)
- [Clean Bight Alliance Australia](#) – Far West Coast SA
- [Oil Free Seas - Australia](#) – Kangaroo Island
- [Surfrider Foundation South Australia](#) & [Surfrider Foundation Australia](#)
- [Australian Marine Conservation Society](#)
- [Bob Brown Foundation](#)
- [Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network](#)
- [Australian Youth Climate Coalition](#)

What do we want?

These are the asks that we have for the campaign:

- **We want oil companies to leave the Bight**
- **We want local councils to oppose risky oil & gas drilling in the Bight**
- **We want the government to stop handing out new leases and rescind all existing petroleum leases in the Bight**
- **We want full protection of the Great Australian Bight from all extractive mining, therefore ask the House of Representatives to enact legislation to ban oil and gas development in the Great Australian Bight now and into the future**



Next steps - have your voice heard

There are different people to speak to and different ways you can talk about the campaign, here are a few:

Decision Makers & Opinion Leaders

- Write, call or meet with Senators on the Senate Inquiry Committee into Oil & Gas Production in the Great Australian Bight to let them know that you want their report to recommend protecting the Bight from risky deep water drilling (See the list on page 19).
- Write to the oil companies directly, ask them to follow BP's responsible lead and leave the Bight. Include an ask for them to consult with you as a relevant stakeholder in the consultation process.
- Write to or better yet, meet with your local council and ask them to put forward a motion to oppose drilling for oil and gas in the Great Australian Bight.
- Write an opinion letter to the editor of your local newspaper, highlighting your connection to the Bight and why it matters to you.

Community members, friends & family

- Collect signatures on the petition sheets included in the toolkit and sign-ups on the statement of concern for people who are keen to get involved. Post them to Level 7/118 King William St, Adelaide once full.
- Use social media to share information, articles, and images to get the campaign message out there.
- Post your own beautiful images on social media of coastal southern Australia and hashtag with #FightForTheBight
- Put a campaign bumper sticker on your car or wheelie bin to show your support and encourage others to!

Want to activate others to join the campaign?

Talk to your friends & family about the campaign to protect the Bight:

- Have 10 face-to-face conversations with people you know about why protecting the Bight is important. Don't underestimate what some face to face conversations can do to support the cause!
- Host a Campaign Meet-up to organise a group of friends to get active on the campaign. Brainstorm some things you could do in your local community.
- Hold a "Stories of Nature" session to share your love of nature with your friends, family, neighbours, whoever! (Get in contact with The Wilderness Society SA for more info)

Hold a community event:

- Screen a film to show the devastating impacts of oil spills, or successful community campaigns
- Organise a community meeting or forum to get your community talking about the Bight.
- Put on a fundraiser gig, quiz night, art or talent show to contribute vital funds to the campaign.
- Hold an info/cake/fundraising stall and hand out flyers at your local sports club, community centre, car boot sale or main street.
- The possibilities are endless! If you have other ideas, let us know at fightforthebight@gmail.com.au

Attend an event with your friends:

- Check out the Great Australian Bight Alliance on facebook to see what's on near you.



Language to use

Using descriptive keywords is helpful to paint a picture of the situation.

Try to use a variety of words to keep readers or listeners interested.

Here are some examples:

- Secrecy / lack of transparency / failure of governance
- Benthic Protection Zone - seafloor has had high level protection for almost 20 years. This was designated in recognition of the pristine yet little studied nature of the area.
- The exploration drilling phase is the most dangerous phase of deep sea drilling.
- Deep sea drilling - is a preferable term to offshore drilling as it highlights the huge depths
- Be conscious of the use of “The Bight” verses “The Great Australian Bight” depending on the context.
- High-risk deep-sea drilling – emphasise that this is new potentially dangerous territory in treacherous conditions.
- Fossil fuel industrialisation of this unique region will mean increased petroleum industry operations and shipping with increased risk and impact of animal strike, pollution, biosecurity hazards, and underwater noise.
- Incredible species only found in southern Australian waters, with new species just found.
- Endangered species – eg: the Australian Sea Lion, Southern Right Whale and many more
- Putting other integral industries like tourism and commercial fishing at risk

How to be heard

Talkback radio

Talk back radio is a great way of getting conservation voices heard on the issue of risk associated with drilling The Great Australian Bight. In your own words, tell the listeners why we should not let oil companies drill in the Great Australian Bight.

Before you call

- Write down one or two points to jolt your memory, but resist the urge to read them out word for word.
- Call from your landline if you can.
- Turn off your radio while you’re on the phone.
- When you ring in, you will first speak to a producer who will want to know what you plan to say. You will then either be placed on hold until there is a slot for you to speak, or they might call you back.

When you are on air

- Get to the point. You’ll probably only get about 30 seconds on air.
- If the presenter is being provocative, don’t bite back.
- Avoid unduly personal comments about the host, guest or other individuals.

SA talkback radio stations (make a similar list in your local area)

Metro Adelaide:

ABC Adelaide (891AM) - 1300 222 891

- Breakfast with Matt Abraham and David Bevan: 6-9am
- Mornings with Ali Clarke: 9am
- Drive with Ian Henschke: 4pm

FiveAA (1395AM) - (08) 8223 0000

- Breakfast with David Penberthy and Will Goodings: 6am to 9am

- Leon Byner: Mornings 9am to 12pm (note: Leon is very anti marine sanctuaries)

Fresh (92.7FM) - 1300 737 374

NOVA - 08 8419 5919

Triple M Adelaide - 08 8290 1047

Radio Adelaide (101.5FM) - (08) 8303 5000
(Mornings & environment show)



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Regional SA stations:

- Mt Gambier – ABC South East SA (1161AM) (08) 8724 1000
- Pt Lincoln / Eyre Peninsula – ABC West Coast SA (1485AM) (08) 8683 2600
- Pt Lincoln - 89.9 Magic FM (08) 8682 5000
- Pt Pirie - ABC North and West SA (639AM) -1300 160 222
- 5AU / 5CS Regional AM radio 08 8642 2444 - syndicate 5AA between 9-11am
- 5CC (Port Lincoln) Regional AM radio - 08 8682 5000
- 5MU (Murray Bridge) 08 8532 4455
- 5SE (Mt Gambier) 08 8724 9233
- Mix 102.3 08 8300 1001
- 5EBI FM News & Current Affairs 08 8211 7635

Writing letters to the Editor

Send a letter to the Editor to your local or national newspapers in support of the campaign.

Letters to the Editor of your local paper and other state newspapers can be a powerful tool for public advocacy. The quickest and easiest way to write a letter to the Editor is to send an email via the newspaper's website (see under 'local newspapers' for links).

Tips when writing a letter to the Editor

- Always include your name, address and phone number(s). The newspaper can be expected to call you to verify your submission before it publishes your letter.
- Follow up with a call to the newspaper on the same day it's emailed, to make sure that your letter has been received (and doesn't languish in an editor's mailbox).
- Keep it short and concise. Many newspapers have word limits in the 200-300 word range. Two to three paragraphs should be adequate. In your first paragraph, introduce your problem and sum up your objection. In the second paragraph, include a few sentences to support your view. End with a great summary.
- Let your sense of humour and irony shine through.
- If your letter is in response to a recent news article, identify the title and date of the article in your letter. Send your response the same day the article is published.
- Aim to send your letter by 1pm to meet deadlines.
- Check spelling, punctuation and grammar. Use spell-check or have a friend proofread your letter to check for error

Local newspapers

Click on the links below to make sure conservation opinions on protecting the Bight are heard at a local level:

[Adelaide Advertiser](#)

[The KI Islander](#)

[West Coast Sentinel](#)

[Port Lincoln Times](#)

[Eyre Peninsula Tribune](#)

[The South-East Coastal Leader](#)

[The Boarder Watch](#)

[The Transcontinental](#)

[Flinders News](#)

[The Recorder](#)

[Whyalla News](#)

[Yorke Peninsula Country Times](#)

It's also helpful to send letters to the editor in all the Messenger Newspapers in metro Adelaide.

Go to [Messenger Newspapers](#) website and select your region.



Host a campaign meet-up / action group

Hosting a meet-up can be key for groups at any stage, whether you're just getting started and looking for more people to join, or whether you're launching the "Fight for the Bight" campaign in your local area and want to invite friends, community members, and allies to get involved.

This section focuses primarily on how to organize a meet-up with the goal of getting a new local Fight for the Bight action initiative going, through the steps and principles are the same regardless of what stage your group is at!

A few tips

Running a meeting isn't rocket science, but there are a few key things to keep in mind to make sure your meeting is successful:

- Have clear goals you want to achieve from the meet-up, like getting to know new people in your community interested in climate change or marine conservation, or figuring out what first action you want to take together to build a powerful local action group.
- Design your agenda to make sure you achieve your goals in the time frame you have available.
- Delegate someone to facilitate; who has some facilitation experience or is a friendly, outgoing person who is a good listener and can help direct the conversation.
- People are more willing to talk when they're fed – think about making your meeting a community dinner or potluck!
- Having name tags and doing a round of introductions can go a long way in helping people to get to know each other.
- Set chairs up in a circle. Don't set up your meeting where everyone is facing the front, like a classroom. If you want to build a community of leaders, set everyone up to be on equal ground to participate.
- Make it fun! This is perhaps the most important tip. Incorporate a fun element, like a game, song, dance, or art project. By making it fun, you break the ice, and hopefully make people more interested to come to the next meeting.





Step by step

1. Bring together a coordinating team

Whether it's just you and a friend, or a group of 10, it is helpful to have collaborators to share the work. With your team, discuss the goals for your meet-up, who you want to make sure is present, how you'd like to run the meet-up in the most exciting and appropriate way for your community, and how you plan to follow up. If you're just getting started, your goals might be along the lines of getting to know more people in the community interested in taking action to stop oil companies from deep sea drilling in the Great Australian Bight and identifying initiatives to take on together to address this.

2. Decide upon a date, time, and location

Now it's time for the nitty gritty – pick a date, time, and figure out a location where you can have it. Ideal locations are easily accessible by public transit, walking, or bicycling, have enough space, have a whiteboard or projector, and are free to use. Try reaching out to schools, faith organizations, community centres, or even someone's home will work.

3. Reach out

Make a plan to reach out, while being intentional about getting as diverse and representative a group there as possible. Think about your goals of the meeting, and what voices will be important to reach those goals. Then make sure your outreach plan prioritizes calling and e-mailing the corresponding community leaders and groups. If you're looking to host a big and open community meeting, by all means spread the word through newsletters, local lists, posters, on bulletin boards, and more. This is a great job to involve everyone in your coordinating team in – everyone has a network of friends and acquaintances they can reach out to!

4. Set an agenda

Design an agenda for the meeting, creating space for a round of introductions (creativity encouraged!), discussion (up to you how structured you want this to be), discussion of action items and next steps, time to mingle, eat, and get to know each other, and some kind of fun activity. You might want to start the meeting with a presentation or video if you want to frame the discussion, if the group doesn't know much about the Great Australian Bight campaign yet, etc. email fightforthebight@gmail.com to request a presentation.

5. Prepare

Make sure to check in with your team before the meeting to make sure you have any necessary equipment, snacks, handouts, sign-up sheets (especially a copy of the 'statement of concern', and that everyone knows their roles during the meeting. Make sure you have a facilitator and note-taker at least – having a photographer, food and drink captain, sign-up sheet coordinator, and fun activity director are also helpful roles.

6. Run the meet-up!

Do your best to stick to your agenda to respect people's time, but remember to stay flexible and make it fun. If people are really getting into a particular discussion topic, maybe it's ok to let them talk a little longer and shorten the next agenda item. Make sure you have a sign-up sheet to capture the emails of everyone who shows up so you can follow up. Do your best to leave the meeting with some kind of follow-up action, whether it's scheduling the next meeting, your first action, or something else. Most importantly, listen, connect with people, and have fun!

7. Follow-up

Make sure you send an email to everyone who came to the meeting as soon as possible so they know you're serious about taking action and keeping things moving!



Contact your local MP, Councillors and Senators

Let your local Member of Parliament know why it's important to protect the Great Australian Bight from oil & gas drilling.

It is important that your elected local, state and federal government representatives know that you expect them to help protect our precious marine environment, tourism & fishing industries and our coastal way of life. There are loads of different issues that politicians are tuned into, but unless they know a particular issue is important to the people they're representing, it might not get any attention.

See the “Principles for meeting with your MP” guide booklet included in the Bight Alliance Info Kit for a comprehensive guide to meeting your local Member of Parliament.

How to write a letter to a politician

Never underestimate the power of an old-fashioned letter. A letter shows that you've put time, planning and consideration into contacting someone. It can make a more lasting impression than an email, and will help you structure your thoughts so the end result has more impact.

Before you start – be prepared!

You will need to do some research and find out as much as you can about the issue before writing – much of the information in this kit will help you get started. Make sure you know who it is you're writing to and what their interests, portfolio, and background is – tailor your letter to them and address them with the correct title.

1. **Highlight your personal connection** – whether it's where you live, childhood family holidays, regular fishing, or where you catch the best waves, make sure you provide your own story.
2. **Find the facts** – politicians appreciate statistics and facts; these will also help you backup your argument. To start off check out ABS statistics as well as some reports and policies that the government itself produces. And don't forget to quote or reference your sources (include a link if possible).
3. **Show off your supporters** - Demonstrate that you know your friends and enemies by finding out who publicly supports your position and who doesn't. If you have powerful supporters, name-check them in the letter. If there's a well-known argument against your position, acknowledge that it exists but put forward your counter-argument. You have to be brief, of course, but it's worth looking for a good quote from a media interview or speech.
4. **Compare** - Find out what's happening in other areas of your state, interstate and internationally to do with your cause. This is part of what government calls researching "Best Practice" examples. By using real examples, you could show that the government is doing some things right, but needs to catch up in other areas.
5. **Use the lingo** - Research the language and catch phrases used in current government policies. It helps if you can link your argument to current Government 'strategies', 'priorities' or 'programs'. Look for these in publications from government websites.
6. **Have a clear request** – maybe you want to meet them in person to show them the oil spill modelling, maybe you want them to make a representation to their party or the relevant minister about your opposition to drilling in the Bight. Use your judgement to figure out what their level of support or understanding is to tailor your ask.

Once you have gathered your information, take time to think about how you might get your message across. You don't want to fill the letter with too many facts and you certainly don't want to confuse the reader. To make a clear argument choose only a few key points and briefly explain them using your research as evidence.



Key tips for writing your letter

- Use a standard letter layout for formal correspondence
- Keep it Simple (KIS) – try to keep it to one page
- Think Quality, NOT Quantity
- Focus on one issue – don't stray from talking about the issue or you will risk rambling
- Be positive, formal and polite – the reader is more likely to consider your concerns this way
- Don't plagiarise – copying words or language from someone else will not make your letter any better, if anything it shows it isn't coming from you.
- Use your research to support your statement
- Ask a few questions to let them know you are expecting a specific response
- Be clear about what you expect them to do as a result of your letter
- Don't forget to include your contact details, and sign it personally.

Sending your Letter

Just like emailing or making a meeting, it's really important that you direct your request to the right person. It could be the member that represents you in your electorate (find out your electorate at www.aec.gov.au/esearch/main.htm or your federal MP www.australia.gov.au/) or the Minister or Shadow Minister who has responsibility for your issue. Bear in mind that most Ministers are incredibly busy, so it might take some time before you get a response.

Follow Up

Be reasonable if you're setting a date by which you'd like a response and allow at least a month. If you haven't had a response after a month or so, call or email as a follow up, making reference to the date and topic of your letter. You could even write a follow up letter.

If you do get a response, thank the politician for taking the time to get back to you. This establishes a good relationship that you can use for any future activities.

Government links

Search for your electorate and your MP: www.aec.gov.au/esearch/main.htm

Links to all Federal Government departments, as well as state and territory government pages: www.australia.gov.au/

If you've managed to take on any of the tasks we've suggested above – you're a real campaign hero!
Thank you for standing up for the Great Australian Bight!

Senators on the Senate Inquiry Committee

All Senators' mail can be addressed to [their name], PO Box 6100, Senate, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore (SA) Phone: (02) 6277 3178 senator.kakoschke-moore@aph.gov.au	Senator Anne Urquhart (SA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3434 senator.urquhart@aph.gov.au	Senator David Fawcett (SA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3418 senator.fawcett@aph.gov.au	Senator Glenn Sterle (WA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3615 senator.sterle@aph.gov.au
Senator Chris Back (WA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3733 senator.back@aph.gov.au	Senator Alex Gallacher (SA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3450 senator.gallacher@aph.gov.au	Senator Sarah Hanson-Young (SA) Telephone: (02) 6277 3430 senator.hanson-young@aph.gov.au	



More Information

Check out these websites:

Fight for the Bight website

[Fightforthebight.org.au](http://fightforthebight.org.au)

The Wilderness Society's Great Australian Bight Campaign:

<https://www.wilderness.org.au/articles/great-australian-bight>

Sea Shepherd's Operation Jeedara Website:

<https://www.seashepherd.org.au/jeedara/>

The Bob Brown Foundations Great Australian Bight webpage:

http://www.bobbrown.org.au/great_australian_bight

The Wilderness Society's "Irreversible" video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uD-ccwl1lIQ>

Oil spill modelling (downloadable modelling):

http://www.fightforthebight.org.au/oil_spill_modelling

Get in contact

If you'd like more information or to get involved, we'd love to hear from you!

Send an email to fightforthebight@gmail.com with the subject "Bight campaign info"

Or you can email our Coastal Community Engagement Organisers directly:

- Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island & Limestone Coast – tammy-jo.sutton@wilderness.org.au – 0422 078 021
- Yorke & Eyre Peninsulas & Far West Coast SA – cristel.chambers@wilderness.org.au – 0401 232 301
- Victoria, Tasmania & South Western Australia – jaxon.barnes@wilderness.org.au – 0450 605 734

Or call (08) 8231 6586 and we can help you find a way to get involved.