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AFFAIR REVEALED: VICTORIANS LOVE THE COAST

The latest market research, released today by Janet Bolitho, Interim Chair of the Victorian Coastal Council, confirms that Victorians are doing their part to entrench the Australian reputation as a beach loving nation.

Ms Bolitho said that the coast remains one of the most important natural features to Victorians and that the sea change phenomenon does not look like stopping any time soon.

“The latest market research shows that people are still actively seeking to live in small laid-back places with friendly locals and little traffic.

“In fact, 65% of people who previously lived elsewhere before moving to the coast lived in Melbourne.

“And those of us not living on the coast average 24 day trips each year to our beloved beaches, with half of us staying overnight.

“That’s a lot of trips to the coast, perhaps supported by the fact that almost 20% of Victorians have access to a beach house, either owned by themselves or through family.

“This is all great news in terms of our lifestyles but also highlights the need to manage our coast so that it is not loved to death.

“With about 300,000 Victorians considering moving to the coast in the next five years, making sure that our coast is managed sustainably is a top priority.

“Pleasingly, the research shows that most Victorians think that taking steps to address climate change now is really important, even if it is expensive.

“Erosion was also cited in focus groups as one of many concerns about our coast and the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Ryan Smith, has asked the Victorian Coastal Council to undertake research to understand the current extent of erosion on Victoria’s outer coast.

“Technical assessments for this research will be complete by the middle of this year,” Ms Bolitho said.

The market research shows that atmosphere and scenery is driving Victorians to visit the coast and that we love using the coast for walking and catching up with friends and family.

“Phillip Island, Sorrento, Lorne, Torquay and Apollo Bay are the top five spots that Victorians visit,” Ms Bolitho said.

“With these market research findings, the Victorian Coastal Council will review and improve the Victorian Coastal Strategy, which guides how Victoria’s coast is managed.

Media contact: Janet Bolitho 0411 096 400.



“This research complements a report on the most significant issues for Victoria’s coastline according to 43 of our top scientists, also recently released by the Victorian Coastal Council,” Ms Bolitho said.

For a full copy of the market research or the report on emerging scientific issues on Victoria’s coast, go to: www.vcc.vic.gov.au