

Swansea's artificial reef to be expanded

DAMON CRONSHAW
14/10/2008 10:32:00 PM
AN artificial reef off Galgabba Point, Swansea, will be expanded under a plan Primary Industries Minister Ian Macdonald will announce today.

Three years ago, 180 reef balls were placed in Lake Macquarie to assess how artificial reefs worked.

With marine life flourishing on the reef, a further 420 reef balls are set to be added.

The six reefs, each separated by 350 metres, will end up with 100 reef balls each.

"Recreational fishing groups have been so impressed with the reefs in Lake Macquarie, they have been calling to expand the project and that's what we plan to do," Mr Macdonald said.

"Two years of scientific monitoring of the artificial reefs have shown they have created valuable fish habitat, with more than 40 species of fish found living on the reefs."

Fish included yellowfin bream, snapper, whiting, flathead, yellowtail kingfish and amberjack.

The reefs are made of moulded concrete balls, which can be removed if necessary.

"Reef balls are made using a special mix of concrete that allows algae to grow quickly, creating ideal marine habitat for fish and invertebrates," Mr Macdonald said.

The project, which needs Lake Macquarie City Council approval, will be paid for with money from recreational fishing licence fees.

The reef's success has surprised some scientists.

Fisheries officers said the artificial reef was starting to mirror natural reefs.

The reef had become covered in many different types of algae, providing a plentiful food supply for fish.

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The Reef Balls uses in this project have been used successfully in over 5000 projects worldwide in over 56 different countries. It's always exciting to see this valuable technology being shared with communities as a tool to help them enhance oceanic ecosystems. Todd Barber, Chairman, Reef Ball Foundation www.reefball.org

Posted by [Todd Barber](#) on 14/10/2008 11:53:14 PM

Does this mean that Lake Macquarie will get a comprehensive study of ALL of the aquatic life, including SHARKS (rays are sharks) and TURTLES? Does the concrete have FlyAsh in it? Turtles also feed on algae, are there any detrimental effects on this practice?

Posted by [artyzandz](#) on 15/10/2008 11:13:43 AM

Particular Marine life maybe flourishing within the massive Gigalites of "once through" water system in the Earing Energy Canals. Does that mean it's a good thing for the Aquatic environs? Which Rec Fishing Groups are calling for more Reef Balls, if the Fishing is so good in Lake Mac why would they want more specific areas of congregation, tangling their lines? & You're right ArtyzAuds, Turtles are attracted to Algae & seaweeds. They are also curious animals. Will the additional Fishing activity cause more marine debris(which is a Key Threatening Process) & more sad entanglements & Deaths of this Ancient Mariner? Be good to see the scientific monitoring data. I heard that the reef balls were regularly buried up for the cameras. That's not real scientific. Mix in the concrete? (MMM Maybe this is just another way of ridding the system of the overflowing Fly Ash?) Which Scientists are surprised by the Reefs "success" & Why? some names would increase credibility. Sure this isn't a bit of Mr McDonalds Spinning "Churnalism"? soo many questions...

Posted by [turtletale](#) on 15/10/2008 12:40:59 PM

gee the Chairman from Reef Ball Foundation was off the mark pretty quick with his comment. Did the story appear online yesterday?

Posted by [turtletale](#) on 15/10/2008 12:54:39 PM

No fly ash is used in reefballs. Seeing 700,000 reefballs have been deployed worldwide with no detrimental effects some of the concerns expressed are ill-founded. If some people are so concerned about turtles etc [& good on them] they should find out what the threats are, and make submissions to the relevant authorities and user groups to be more 'friendly' to marine life. Stopping fishing is what I have done-instead I make reefballs in Aotearoa-NZ. After one year you cannot tell they are made of concrete - which kinda proves that it is inert enough for very fast colonisation. Cheers Dave

Posted by [stopwhaling](#) on 15/10/2008 7:44:46 PM

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