

National Campaign Policy on Coastal Process Intervention

The Surfrider Foundation opposes any degradation or depletion of existing artificial or natural wave-riding resources due to the development of man-made structures or activities in the coastal zone. In all cases any development that proposes the loss of these resources must be opposed and stopped.

The coastal zone is a dynamic environment characterised by a variety of processes that lead to erosion and accretion of the shoreline across a range of time scales. As a result, public and private infrastructure in areas subject to coastal processes is exposed to a number of risks associated primarily with storm damage in the immediate term and changes to the position and stability of the shoreline in the medium to long term.

Surfrider Foundation Australia advocates planned retreat in areas of open coast where public or private infrastructure is threatened by coastal erosion hazard. Planned retreat refers to a coordinated and proactive removal of public and private infrastructure from the coastal hazard zone prior to the infrastructure being damaged by coastal erosion and/or the infrastructure altering the natural course of coastal erosion processes while preserving coastal amenity, values and importantly public access.

Surfrider Foundation Australia's position is that people who enjoy the amenity of living within the coastal hazard zone (i.e. proximity to the coast) must accept the risks associated with developing in such locations regardless of when those risks become apparent. They cannot expect public authorities to meet all costs associated with protection or removal of their property. It is the view of Surfrider Foundation that individuals and communities who derive benefit from and enjoy the coast have a responsibility and obligation to assist in the sustainable stewardship of these areas. Governments at all levels must play a lead role in planning for conservation, funding restoration and enhancement programs and building the capacity of the community to participate meaningfully in coastal management. Without a strong partnership between government and community, coastal conservation cannot be achieved.