

**OYSTER HARBOUR, ALBANY — RESTORATION**

*Statement by Minister for Fisheries*

**MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Fisheries)** [12.14 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the work beginning on yet another McGowan government election commitment—the restoration of Albany’s Oyster Harbour. Work has begun on the \$1 million restoration of the reef, with the first barge of locally sourced limestone rubble unloaded to form the base of the new reefs. The limestone is to be placed over a total area of 800 square metres to create a series of reef segments and to restore habitat for Australian flat oysters in the harbour. The use of locally sourced limestone to build the base of the reefs, stocked with locally produced oyster spat, provides opportunities for local jobs while also allowing a native aquatic species to recover within this beautiful harbour. Once abundant throughout the bays and estuaries of Southern Australia from Perth to Sydney, 99 per cent of Australian flat oyster reefs have been wiped out. With the reef construction now underway, we are a major step closer to restoring a habitat for the threatened Australian flat oysters, which were previously abundant in Oyster Harbour. This exciting project is hoping to deliver on all fronts, with the reefs expected to improve overall biodiversity and water quality in Oyster Harbour and boost recreational fishing opportunities in the area.

The McGowan government is committed to bringing back the reef habitat and biodiversity values of Oyster Harbour and, with the wonderful work of the Nature Conservancy, we are on our way to doing that.