

Protecting Australia's marine life from seismic blasting

Join the sea of supporters who have already raised their voices on behalf of ocean wildlife.

Help protect whales, penguins, sharks, turtles, fish, seals and all of Australia's ocean life.

Join us in taking action to end seismic blasting now!



Australian Marine Conservation Society

marineconservation.org.au/fossilfuels

What is Seismic Blasting?

Seismic blasting is the first step in oil and gas exploration in our oceans. Seismic blasting surveys involve towing multiple lines with dozens of air cannons each behind a vessel. Each air cannon fires loud underwater explosions every 5-20 seconds, day and night, 7 days a week for months on end. The blasts can reach almost 260 decibels, a sound so loud it can be detected thousands of kilometres away.



How seismic blasting harms marine life

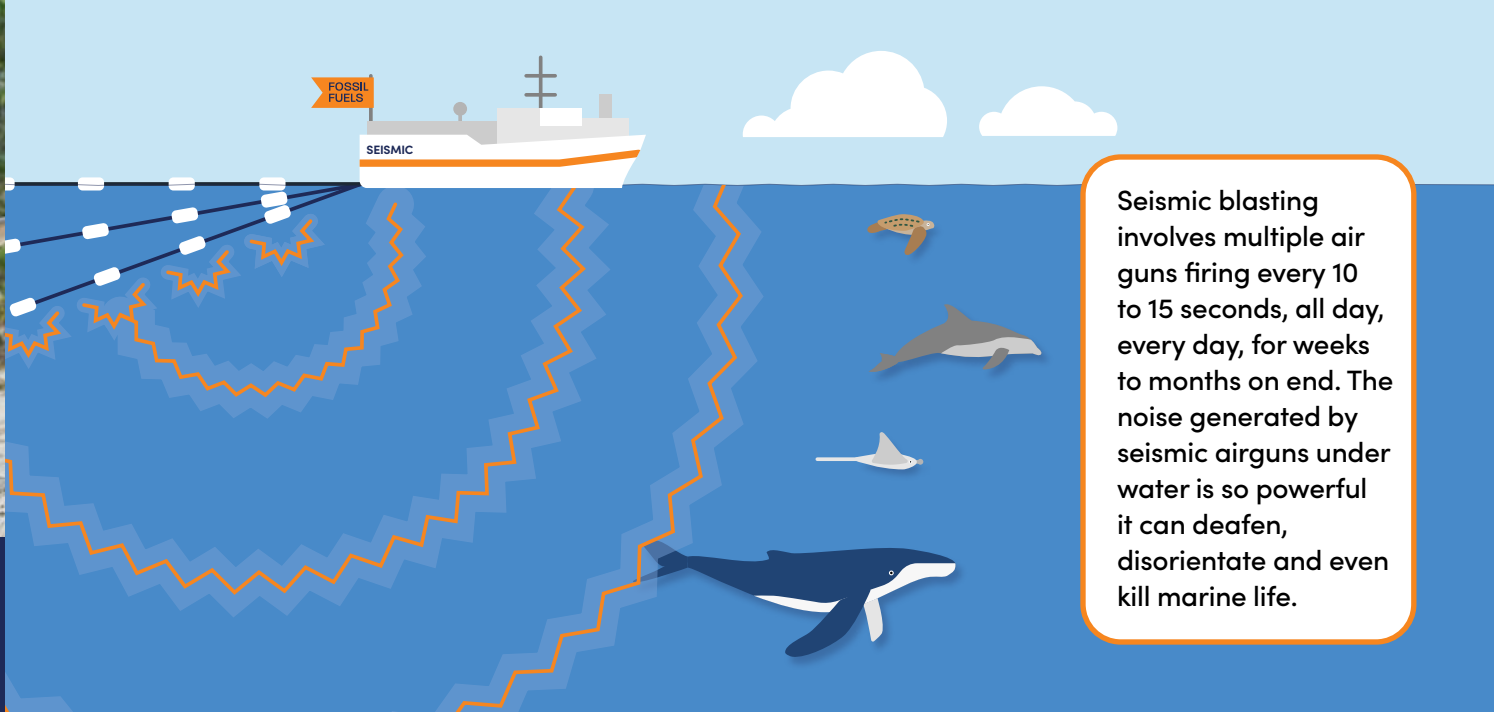
Seismic blasting is loud, like an underwater bomb, deafening and disorientating whales, turtles, rays and sharks and killing krill and plankton, the food web foundation of ocean life. Seismic blasting has been linked to temporary and permanent hearing loss, habitat abandonment, mating and feeding disruption, beach strandings and possible death in marine mammals like whales. It also triggers widespread death of krill up to 1.2 km around each blast, and harms scallops and lobsters. Despite the mounting evidence of the harm to marine life caused by seismic blasting, the Australian Government is still approving new proposals to blast large expanses of our oceans for fossil fuels.

For more information on seismic blasting and carbon dumping, visit marineconservation.org.au/fossilfuels



A threat of seismic proportions

Seismic blasting now threatens marine life around Australia, with fossil fuel exploration, gas drilling and carbon pollution dumping projects and proposals spanning from the cool, dark waters off Victoria's coast to oceans near Western Australia's coral reefs and in Northern Territory waters. The Australian Government has allocated dozens of marine areas to seismic blasting for fossil fuel and carbon dumping CCS exploration, threatening marine life from tiny krill and plankton to enormous migrating whales.



Seismic blasting involves multiple air guns firing every 10 to 15 seconds, all day, every day, for weeks to months on end. The noise generated by seismic airguns under water is so powerful it can deafen, disorientate and even kill marine life.

The problem with SPAs

Some seismic blasting projects use a cheap, quick permit called a Special Prospecting Authority (SPA). These dodgy SPA permits allow blasting right up to marine park boundaries. This risks ongoing harm to endangered species like whales that move in and out of protected areas. It's time to abolish SPA permits and close this dangerous loophole.

Greenwashing Carbon Pollution

Seismic blasting to map beneath the sea floor is the first step in offshore carbon pollution dumping, also known as carbon capture and storage (CCS). CCS is a proven failure the fossil fuel industry wants to dump in our fragile oceans. It's a fossil fuel lobby pipedream designed to greenwash their attempts to keep polluting. There are risks of leaks and pollution at every stage. Offshore carbon dumping should never be allowed to start in Australian waters.

Oceans lovers push back!

Community pressure is making a difference. In a major victory for marine conservation, the TGS/SLB seismic blasting proposal for Australia's south-east waters was officially cancelled in late 2024. The proposal threatened critical habitats for endangered pygmy blue whales and southern right whales. But thanks to people power and widespread community opposition, the project was cancelled almost two years after it was first proposed. A win for our oceans!

Seismic moratorium

AMCS is calling on the Australian Government to declare an immediate moratorium (temporary ban) on seismic blasting in Australian waters to allow for more research, law reform and vital new restrictions to protect our precious ocean ecosystems. Add your voice to our campaign here: marineconservation.org.au/fossilfuels