



## Cockburn Sound monitoring at risk, says cash-starved council

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Effective environmental monitoring of Cockburn Sound is at risk at a time when unprecedented development is planned for the area.

The Cockburn Sound Management Council is charged with reporting on the health of the Sound but it has failed to receive the State Government funding it needs to maintain current levels of monitoring and projects.

CSMC chairwoman Kateryna Longley, who oversees the 23-member council, said the CSMC had so far only been granted its annual base funding of \$240,000 but it needed another \$300,000 a year.

The Government said yesterday the council was adequately funded to carry out its core functions. But Professor Longley said without the extra money it would have to forgo projects such as a multiple use study, Owen Anchorage monitoring and seagrass

testing, and reduce water monitoring.

"It's a bad moment with so many projects coming into the arena to be looked at," she said. "We're seriously reduced in our capacity to do the things that the Cockburn Sound Management Council does."

The CSMC was set up in 2000 to co-ordinate environmental planning and management of the Sound. Its members come from community, conservation and recreation groups, industry and government.

Kwinana Industries Council director Chris Oughton said the CSMC provided quality scientific data on the health of the Sound.

"There's a huge amount of development on the books for Cockburn Sound. What CSMC needs to be able to do is make sure that all that development is studied properly," he said.

The health of Cockburn Sound has recently come under scrutiny, with the Water Corporation forced to cut

production at the Kwinana desalination plant last month because of low oxygen levels in the Sound.

Several projects are also proposed for the area, including the Fremantle Port Authority's plans to build a \$1.3 billion port. The Wanliss Street jetty and marina, Cape Perron canal development and marina and James Point Private Port are other multi-million-dollar developments planned.

Environment Minister David Templeman said a \$300,000 annual funding agreement with the CSMC was for specific projects and finished this year. He was looking at other funding options, including increasing licence fees for major emitters into the Sound.

"The funding provided to the Cockburn Sound Management Council is adequate for them to carry out their core functions — monitoring the health of the Cockburn Sound and its improving water quality and reporting to Government on it," he said.