



Protect the Great Australian Bight	
Party:	Australian Greens
Summary of proposal: The proposal would introduce legislation to ban drilling in the Great Australian Bight and progress its UNSECO World Heritage nomination. The proposal would start from 1 July 2025.	
Additional information (based on further advice provided): The proposal would provide funding for state and federal government resourcing to support the UNSECO World Heritage nomination through stakeholder participation, First Nations engagement, dossier preparation, and assessment of heritage criteria and Outstanding Universal Value.	

Costing overview

The proposal would be expected to decrease the fiscal and underlying cash balances by around \$9 million over the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period (see Table 1). This impact reflects an increase in administered and departmental expenses.

The proposal would be expected to have an impact beyond the 2025-26 Budget forward estimates period. A breakdown of the financial implications (including separate public debt interest (PDI) tables) over the period to 2035-36 is provided at Attachment A.

The Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) has not assessed the feasibility of implementing this policy by the intended policy start date of 1 July 2025.

Table 1: Protect the Great Australian Bight – Financial implications (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	Total to 2028-29
Fiscal balance	-7.1	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-9.0
Underlying cash balance	-7.1	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-9.0

(a) A positive number represents an increase in the relevant budget balance; a negative number represents a decrease.

(b) PDI impacts are not included in the totals.

Methodology and key assumptions

The proposed legislative changes (ban on drilling) would have no financial implications, as government departments are resourced to draft legislation in the course of their usual activities.

Furthermore, the proposed legislation would not have any direct financial implications for the Australian government, as there is currently no oil and gas exploration occurring in the Great Australian Bight region.

The extent and distribution of departmental and administered expenses were estimated based on the cost of previous Australian World Heritage nominations.

Financial implications were rounded consistent with the PBO's rounding rules.¹

Data sources

Commonwealth of Australia (2025) *Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2025*, Commonwealth of Australia.

ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) (2024) [Bight World Heritage bid seeks to ban oil drilling](#). ABC News website, accessed 14 May 2025.

SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) (2024) [Push to include Great Australian Bight on World Heritage List](#). SBS website, accessed 14 May 2025.

¹ <https://www.pbo.gov.au/for-parliamentarians/how-we-analyse/pbo-rounding-rules>

Attachment A – Protect the Great Australian Bight – Financial implications

Table A1: Protect the Great Australian Bight – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^(a)

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Expenses													
Administered													
<i>State government resourcing & external costs for World Heritage Nomination</i>	-3.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3.9	-3.9
Total – administered	-3.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-3.9	-3.9
Departmental													
<i>Federal government departmental resourcing for World Heritage Nomination</i>	-3.2	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-5.1	-5.1	-5.1
Total – departmental	-3.2	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-5.1	-5.1	-5.1
Total – expenses	-7.1	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-9.0	-9.0	-9.0
Total (excluding PDI)	-7.1	-1.6	-0.2	-0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-9.0	-9.0	-9.0

(a) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

- Indicates nil.

Table A2: Protect the Great Australian Bight – Memorandum item: Public Debt Interest (PDI) impacts – Fiscal and underlying cash balances (\$m)^{(a)(b)}

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	Total to 2028-29	Total to 2035-36
Fiscal balance	-0.2	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.8	-1.4	-5.3
Underlying cash balance	-0.1	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.5	-0.6	-0.8	-1.2	-5.1

(a) As this table is presented as a memorandum item, these figures are not reflected in the totals above. This is consistent with the approach taken in the budget where the budget impact of most measures is presented excluding the impact on PDI. If the reader would like a complete picture of the total aggregate, then these figures would need to be added to the figures above. For further information on government borrowing and financing please refer to the PBO's online budget glossary.²

(b) A positive number for the fiscal balance indicates an increase in revenue or a decrease in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A negative number for the fiscal balance indicates a decrease in revenue or an increase in expenses or net capital investment in accrual terms. A positive number for the underlying cash balance indicates an increase in receipts or a decrease in payments or net capital investment in cash terms. A negative number for the underlying cash balance indicates a decrease in receipts or an increase in payments or net capital investment in cash terms.

² [Online budget glossary – Parliamentary Budget Office \(pbo.gov.au\)](https://pbo.gov.au/online-budget-glossary)