

# Survey Tips

- Mapping the seagrass bed requires accurate work with a GPS. As GPS signals can't penetrate underwater, your device will need to be able to follow you on the surface of the water. For this reason habitat mappings are more easily undertaken by snorkel or in relatively shallow water
- It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the operation of your GPS on the surface. You can even trial the technique by walking around an area on the beach before your dive
- Before your dive you will want to decide on and test a method for your GPS device to follow you on the surface
- We have found that when snorkeling it works well to attach a GPS watch to the back of one person's mask strap. This person will snorkel on the surface, guided by their buddy who can dive deeper if needed
- Alternatively you may need to use a tow float or SMB with your GPS inside. You will need to make sure that your GPS is adequately waterproofed and that the length of the tether is sufficient to reach the surface
- You will need a way of downloading your GPS track following your survey. Apps designed for tracking outdoor activities such as STRAVA work well for this and allow you to download your track as a gpx file
- If you are conducting a survey on the beach, you can simply walk around the edge of the seagrass bed while wearing or holding your GPS device
- Sometimes it is easy to tell where the edge of the seagrass bed is as there will be a distinct line between lush seagrass and bare sediment. Sometimes it is more difficult as the seagrass is patchy around the edges and peters out. In this case as a rule of thumb, if there is more than one shoot per square metre, then the area can be counted as seagrass bed

