

# Save the shellfish plan ready

by LEANNE WEST *MANLY DAILY, SATURDAY JULY 15 1991*

Fears that coastal reefs are being destroyed by shellfish poachers have been outlined in a management plan aimed at stopping the pillage.

The plan, to be put before the Sydney coastal councils group today, sets out a number of strategies, including a detailed public education campaign.

Moves are also afoot to clarify what powers council officers have to take action against shellfish poachers.

Coastal councils regional coastal environmental officer Michael Chanell said rock outcrops at Long Reef and Bondi were considered most at risk from poaching.

Last week fisheries inspectors

seized 160kg of periwinkles and zebra topfish allegedly taken from the Long Reef Aquatic Reserve by five Western Suburbs men.

The haul was the largest ever in the Manly-Warringah area and will lead to increased patrols by fisheries officers.

Mr Chanell, who is based at Warringah Shire Council, said marine life was disappearing from intertidal zones at an alarming rate.

"The loss of the tidal invertebrates upsets the whole ecosystem," he said. "The management report looks at changing bag limits for shellfish collection, giving councils the power

to nominate conservation zones and involving community groups."

Mr Chanell said the coastal councils group also hoped to clear up a "grey area" involving the powers council officers had against poachers.

Ideally, he said, the group would like to see council officers working alongside fisheries inspectors in policing the problem.

The proposed education program would be widespread, taking in ethnic groups which regard certain species of shellfish as a delicacy.

"Many people take shellfish without realising they are doing anything wrong," Mr Chanell said.