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## PROPOSED SOUTH COAST MARINE PARK



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



# Proposed South Coast Marine Park



## PLAN FOR OUR PARKS



Waters off Cape Arid. Photo – Shem Bisluk/DBCA

## Frequently asked questions

### What is a marine park?

Marine parks are created and managed to help achieve the long-term conservation of marine habitats, biodiversity and cultural heritage values, while allowing for a range of ongoing sustainable uses including commercial and recreational fishing, diving, boating and tourism.

### Why is a south coast marine park being proposed?

Marine parks and reserves conserve the marine environment for people to continue to use and enjoy into the future. While Western Australia's oceans, rivers and estuaries are some of the healthiest in the world, the pressures on these areas are growing. By conserving and maintaining healthy marine ecosystems we can help to increase their resilience against threats such as climate change, pollution and overuse of resources.

While significant progress has been made in the establishment of a system of marine parks and reserves in WA over the last 20 years, the south coast is under-represented in the existing network. There is currently only one relatively small marine park in State waters on the south coast – the Walpole and Nornalup Inlets Marine Park (WNIMP). While the WNIMP provides protection for local habitats and biodiversity found within the only permanently open lagoonal estuary on the south coast, it does not extend into coastal waters.

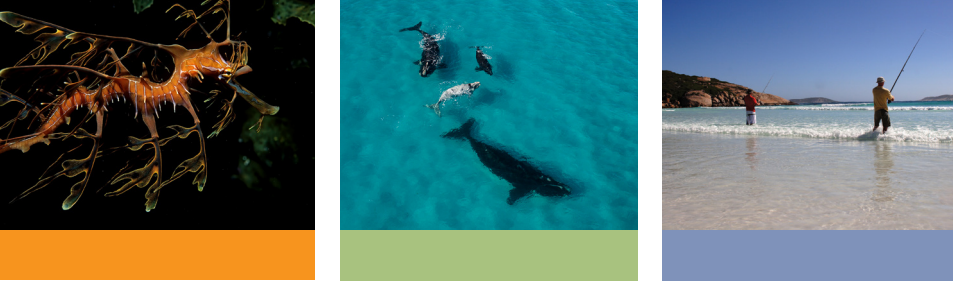
WA's south coast is globally recognised for its biodiversity values. The region supports diverse marine habitats, plants and animals, with many species occurring nowhere else in the world. The creation of a south coast marine park will make a significant contribution to WA's current network of marine parks and reserves and Australia's National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas. It will provide long-term protection for representative marine habitats and biodiversity as well as important cultural heritage sites, while at the same time allowing for ongoing sustainable use.

### What is the purpose of marine park zones?

Marine parks are multiple use, meaning they have different zones allowing different types of activities. The marine park zoning scheme outlines the different zones and what activities are allowed within each zone. Zoning is an important management tool used to conserve marine habitats and biodiversity, as well as manage potentially conflicting activities within a marine park.

The establishment of 'no-take' sanctuary zones allows scientists to carry out long-term monitoring of marine habitats and biodiversity which are relatively unimpacted by human activities. These zones provide important reference areas or a baseline against which to compare areas where localised impacts may be occurring.





### What are the different types of zones within a marine park?

The different types of zones used within WA marine parks are:

- **General use zone** – these zones are used to conserve the marine environment while allowing sustainable commercial and recreational activities to continue.
- **Recreation zone** – these zones are used primarily for recreational purposes, including recreational fishing where it is compatible with the primary recreation purpose of the zone. Commercial fishing is prohibited in recreation zones.
- **Special purpose zone** – these zones are used for a specific conservation purpose, such as the protection of marine habitats. Commercial and recreational activities that are compatible with the specific conservation purpose of the zone are allowed.
- **Sanctuary zone** – these zones provide the highest level of protection for marine plants and animals. They generally include representative habitats and biodiversity, important areas for threatened and protected species, and areas that include significant natural features. Sanctuary zones are 'look but don't take' areas and the only zone where all types of fishing and collecting is prohibited. People can continue to enjoy nature-based activities within these zones, such as wildlife watching, diving, snorkelling and boating.

### Will recreational fishing be allowed in the proposed south coast marine park?

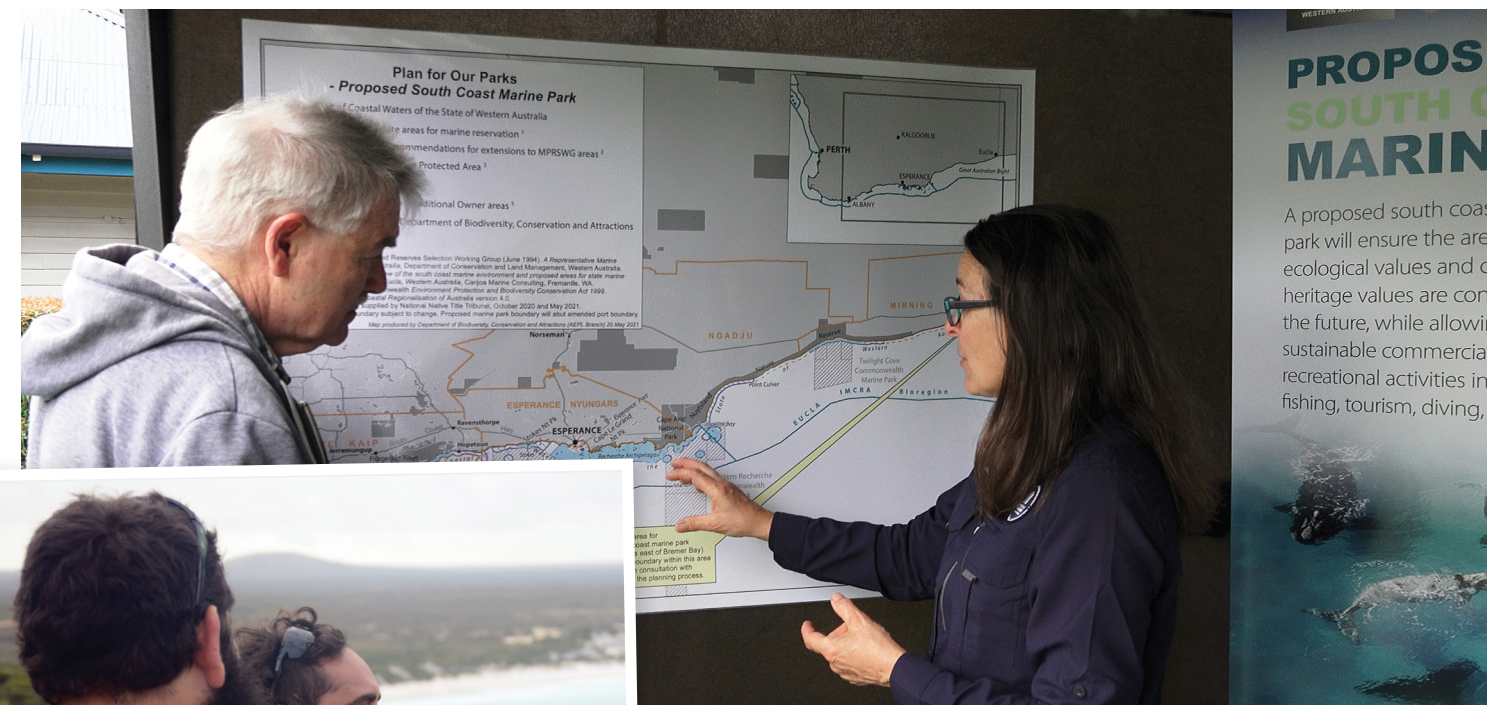
Yes, you will be able to continue to enjoy fishing in the proposed south coast marine park. To conserve representative habitats and biodiversity, fishing and collecting will be prohibited in some areas (e.g. sanctuary zones). Sanctuary zone coverage in WA marine parks currently ranges between 0 and 34%, meaning most of the area within WA's marine parks is open to fishing. The proposed south coast marine park will be carefully designed to minimise impacts to recreational fishers while helping to ensure a healthy marine environment that will support sustainable fishing into the future.

### Will commercial fishing be allowed in the proposed south coast marine park?

Yes, commercial fishing is important to the region's economy and existing sustainable commercial activities will be allowed within the proposed south coast marine park. To conserve representative habitats and biodiversity commercial fishing will be prohibited in some areas (e.g. sanctuary and recreation zones).

The proposed south coast marine park will be carefully designed to minimise impacts to commercial fishers and incorporate any existing restrictions into management arrangements where possible. For example, current

**Below and inset** Fishing off the coast of Esperance.  
Photos – Black Jack Charters and Tourism WA



**Above** Consultation with the public is integral to the marine park planning process.  
Photo – DBCA



**Left** Members of the Esperance Tjaltjraak Native Title Aboriginal Corporation.  
Photo – Esperance Tjaltjraak Native Title Aboriginal Corporation

### What public consultation will be carried out?

Consultation with stakeholders and local communities regarding the proposed south coast marine park has already begun. DBCA will engage with stakeholders and local communities in regional centres on the south coast throughout the marine park planning process. A Community Reference Committee will be established, along with Sector Advisory Groups, to ensure all views are heard and considered (see Community Engagement Strategy). Commercial and recreational fishers, conservation, environment and tourism groups, local government, industry and local communities will all be encouraged to provide input during the development of the indicative management plan. A log of community engagement will be maintained and available on the proposed south coast marine park website.

Once an indicative management plan has been finalised it will be released for a statutory public period of at least three months. Stakeholders and local communities will have a further opportunity to make a submission regarding the proposed south coast marine park management arrangements, including zoning, during this time.

restrictions to commercial fishing activities on the south coast, such as the Australian sea lion Gillnet Exclusion Zones, will be considered in the development of the marine park zoning plan.

Commercial fishers are encouraged to attend consultation meetings and provide input during the marine park planning process, including via their Sector Advisory Group and by making a submission when the indicative management plan is released for public comment.

### Who will manage the proposed south coast marine park?

It is intended that the proposed south coast marine park will be jointly managed between the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) and the area's traditional owners. DBCA also works closely with other State Government agencies, such as the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, who continue to manage fishing in WA marine parks and reserves.





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## What is the difference between the Commonwealth Marine Parks off the south coast of Western Australia and the proposed south coast marine park?

The Commonwealth Marine Parks off the south coast of WA (i.e. South-west Corner, Bremer, Eastern Recherche and Twilight Marine Parks) are managed by the Australian Government through Parks Australia. They are in Commonwealth waters, which extend from the limit of State waters to the limit of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone. The proposed south coast marine park will be established in State waters – the area of ocean extending from mainland and island shorelines to the limit of State waters (i.e. 3nm from the Territorial Sea Baseline).

The different marine environments found in Commonwealth Marine Parks and the proposed south coast marine park (i.e. deeper offshore waters versus shallower inshore waters) means that different marine ecosystems, habitats and biodiversity are/will be conserved within Commonwealth Marine Parks and the proposed south coast marine park.

Where appropriate, management and zoning arrangements for the proposed south coast marine park will be developed that are consistent with those of adjacent Commonwealth Marine Parks.

More information about Commonwealth Marine Parks can be found at [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine/)

**Below** Common dolphin.  
*Photo – Dave and Fiona Harvey*



Cape Arid National Park. *Photo – Shem Bisluk/DBCA*

### More information

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**Header photos:** Leafy seadragon. *Photo – Peter Nicholas.* Southern right whales. *Photo – Peter Nicholas/DBCA.* Fishing on the south coast. *Photo – Tourism WA.* Information current at September 2021. This publication is available in alternative formats on request.