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Department of Biodiversity,  
Conservation and Attractions

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PLAN FOR OUR PARKS



# Sanctuary zones

While a range of activities are permitted in multiple-use marine parks and reserves, zoning minimises conflict by establishing some zones for undisturbed nature study and passive enjoyment of the natural environment and other zones that provide opportunities for extractive activities and use. In Western Australia, marine parks are zoned using one or more zone types: **general use, special purpose, recreation** and **sanctuary** zones.

Sanctuary zones are 'look but don't take' areas managed solely for nature conservation and low impact recreation and tourism. They provide the highest level of protection for vulnerable or protected species and important habitats, as extractive activities like recreational fishing, commercial fishing and collecting are excluded.

Sanctuary zones are fantastic places to enjoy snorkelling or diving, as they tend to be placed in areas with the most spectacular marine wildlife and underwater landscapes. They are designed to protect the full range of marine plants and animals in a particular area, along with significant habitats such coral reefs, seagrass meadows, mangroves and rocky shores. Sanctuary zones provide safe places for threatened marine animals and protect economically

important nursery areas for commercially targeted species such as rock lobsters and schooling areas for fish. They are often adjacent to islands where seabirds, turtles, sea lions and penguins go ashore to breed.

Everyone is encouraged to visit and enjoy sanctuary zones, with the following activities very welcome:

- swimming
- snorkelling and scuba diving
- beach walking and four-wheel driving along shore-based sanctuary zones
- boating
- water sports such as surfing, kayaking, windsurfing, kite surfing, stand up paddle boarding
- low impact tourism like whale watching and sea lion viewing.

Anchoring is permitted in sanctuary zones but please take care to avoid damaging sensitive areas such as corals and seagrass.

Sanctuary zones are also important for scientists to be able to monitor relatively undisturbed marine environments, which they can compare to adjacent areas where activities like fishing are allowed.

### More information

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Information current at February 2024.  
This publication is available in alternative formats on request.

### Have Your Say on the proposed South Coast Marine Park

Public comment is open for four months, until Sunday 16 June 2024.

Download the plans and make an online submission at: [dbca.wa.gov.au/pscmp](http://dbca.wa.gov.au/pscmp)

Your feedback is important and will further shape how the proposed marine park will be managed into the future.