



Australian Government

Department of the Environment and Heritage
National Oceans Office

Oceans Action Bulletin

An Update from the National Oceans Office

13 May 2005

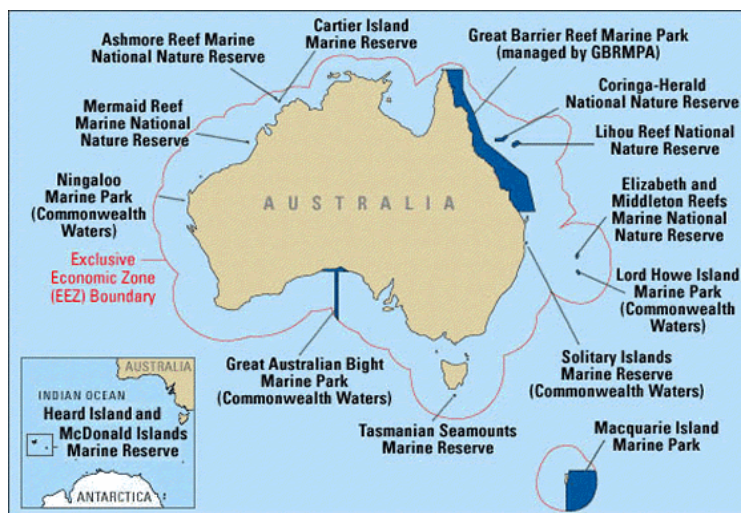
This Bulletin updates you on recent progress in implementing Australia's Oceans Policy and regional marine planning. Please forward to any interested parties. For further information or to unsubscribe from this Bulletin, please email samantha.meyer@oceans.gov.au

Scientific Peer Review for MPA Development

A scientific peer review panel has been set up to help guide the establishment of a national system of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Commonwealth waters.

The Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Senator the Hon Ian Campbell, has appointed to the Scientific Peer Review Panel:

- Dr Ian Poiner, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Marine Science (Chair);
- Professor Bruce Mapstone of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology at the University of Tasmania;
- Dr James Stoddart, Adjunct Associate Professor Marine Science in the School of Plant Biology at the University of Western Australia;
- Dr Keith Sainsbury, Senior Principal Research Scientist at CSIRO Marine Research;
- Mr Peter Farrell, Principal of Macro-Environmental Environment and Resource Consultants; and
- Dr Trevor Ward, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, School of Earth and Geographical Sciences at the University of Western Australia.



Australia's Marine Protected Areas estate

The process for developing the NRSMPA in Commonwealth waters began in the South-east in April 2002. The process has been supported by the provision of high level technical and expert advice from Australia's leading marine science institutions. It has also involved extensive stakeholder participation.

Department of the Environment and Heritage - National Oceans Office:

Phone (03) 6221 5000 ♦ Email: office@oceans.gov.au ♦ Web: www.oceans.gov.au

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The process being used to develop this network of MPAs aims to develop options for sound conservation outcomes balanced with the social, economic and cultural needs of communities. The Australian Government believes that strong stakeholder involvement will foster broad support for MPAs.

To date this process has resulted in two candidate MPAs being developed in the South-east, with an ongoing process to identify other candidate MPAs to make up the final network of representative MPAs in this region.

The development of the NRSMPA in other Commonwealth waters will occur as part of the Regional Marine Planning process being led by the National Oceans Office. Regional Marine Planning is currently underway in waters off northern and south-western Australia. Stakeholders, Government agencies and scientific institutions will participate in developing the NRSMPA in these regions.

As foreshadowed in the South-east Regional Marine Plan, the Peer Review Panel will provide scientific advice on the extent to which the proposed network of MPAs meets the goals of the NRSMPA, particularly in relation to comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness. The Panel will undertake this assessment initially for the proposed network of MPAs in the South-east region.

The Panel's advice, together with the results of public consultation and the Department of the Environment and Heritage's assessment of socio-economic impacts, will form the basis of recommendations to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage.

The State and Territory Governments are also working to declare MPAs in their waters under the national agreement to establish the NRSMPA. MPA development work undertaken by all governments is guided by guidelines agreed by Environment Ministers in 1998.

Join a Voyage of Discovery

Marine scientists are encouraged to register for a workshop aimed at planning a major biodiversity research voyage in Australian waters.

The Census of Marine Life is a bold ten year project to map the international distribution of marine life. An Australian committee has been formed to coordinate national input to the program and to enable access to the results of international Census projects.

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Census Australia is hosting a workshop as part of the Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA) national conference in Darwin in July. Participants in the workshop will have an opportunity to provide input on a potential new biodiversity



research voyage, express interest in taking part and share ideas with other scientists about the gaps in knowledge of Australia's marine biodiversity.

The workshop will be complemented by the morning plenary session of the AMSA conference, which will focus on biodiversity issues and current Australian activity related to the Census.

The National Oceans Office is the Secretariat for the Australian Census of Marine Life Committee. More information on the workshop is available on the Australian Census website – <http://www.coml.org.au:8080/amsa> To register your interest in the workshop contact Australian Census Secretariat Alicja Mosbauer on (03) 6221 5038 or by email coml@oceans.gov.au

Celebrate World Ocean Day in June

World Ocean Day is approaching, and the International Ocean Institute (IOI) has called for marine organisations across the world to take part in this celebration of oceans.

Created in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro - although not yet officially designated by the United Nations - World Ocean Day is an opportunity each year to celebrate our oceans and our personal connection to the sea.

The aim of World Ocean Day is to stage an international 'Celebration of the Sea', increasing public awareness about the future of our oceans and demonstrating how everyone can act to achieve better management of ocean resources.

Last year, the IOI joined with hundreds of aquariums, museums, non-government organisations and zoos on five continents to host a multitude of activities under the theme "From Hilltops to Oceans". This year, the organisers have added a new campaign – "Eating Fish Sensibly".

For more information on World Ocean Day, visit www.worldoceannetwork.org or www.WorldOceanDay.org

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