

South-east Marine Parks Network

Proposed changes to mining and other industrial activities in the Draft South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan

The draft plan seeks to achieve positive outcomes for the environment and the Australian community by increasing protection over important marine habitats, features and species, while supporting use and enjoyment of these special places.

The South-east Marine Parks Network

Australia's South-east Marine Parks Network (SE Network) covers over 700,000 square kilometres and protects examples of incredible species, habitats and ecosystems. Management of these Australian Marine Parks seeks to protect and conserve biodiversity, while providing for compatible ecologically sustainable use.

The Director of National Parks has released a draft plan for the SE Network. Public comment is sought on the draft plan by **14 November 2024**.

Tightened rules for industrial activities in the SE Network

The draft plan prohibits the following industrial activities from occurring within the marine parks:

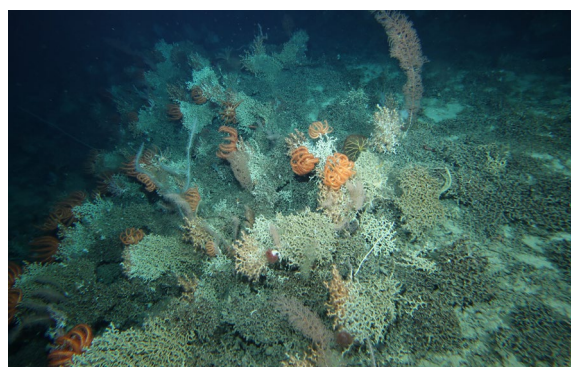
- deep-sea mineral mining
- subsea carbon dioxide storage (including exploration)
- offshore wind farms
- intensive aquaculture
- petroleum exploration and operations outside of existing title areas.

Why restrict industrial activities in marine parks?

The South-east region is a global warming hotspot, where the rate of warming over the past 50 years is in the top 10% globally. In this context, the draft plan seeks to reduce the overall disturbance within marine parks, by restricting, over the next 10 years, the types of industrial developments that can take place irrespective of zoning type.

What about existing petroleum activities?

The Australian Government has committed to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Australian Government has released a Future Gas Strategy, in recognition of the importance of natural gas and existing petroleum activities to secure Australian energy needs in our transition to net zero. The draft plan provides for oil and gas exploration and production to continue in the Multiple Use Zone of the Zeehan Marine Park, where existing petroleum title areas exist.



Deep-sea coral communities in Huon Marine Park (CSIRO)



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Marine Parks

What are existing petroleum activities?

Existing petroleum activities include activities under the following petroleum title types, issued under the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006*:

- existing exploration permits (granted prior to the commencement of the South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2025-2035); and
- the following petroleum titles, where they are within the same area as an exploration permit that was granted prior to the commencement of the new management plan:
 - retention lease
 - production licence
 - infrastructure licence
 - pipeline licence
 - access authority
 - scientific investigation consent

Can existing exploration permits in the Zeehan Marine Park progress to other titles under the OPGGS Act?

Yes. All relevant petroleum activities can occur, provided they are undertaken within existing title areas, in place at the commencement of the new plan. This includes exploration activities associated with an exploration permit, or an access authority, or production activities under relevant titles.

How will impacts of existing petroleum activities on South-east Marine Parks be regulated?

Regulation inside the Zeehan Marine Park

In line with existing arrangements, mining activities in existing petroleum title areas will need to be conducted in accordance with a class approval (Mining) issued by the Director of National Parks. This will require that mining activities within the Zeehan Marine Park continue to be subject to assessment and approval by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA). A draft class approval is available on the [Parks Australia Website](#) and will be finalised following consultation on the draft plan.

Mining activities near marine parks

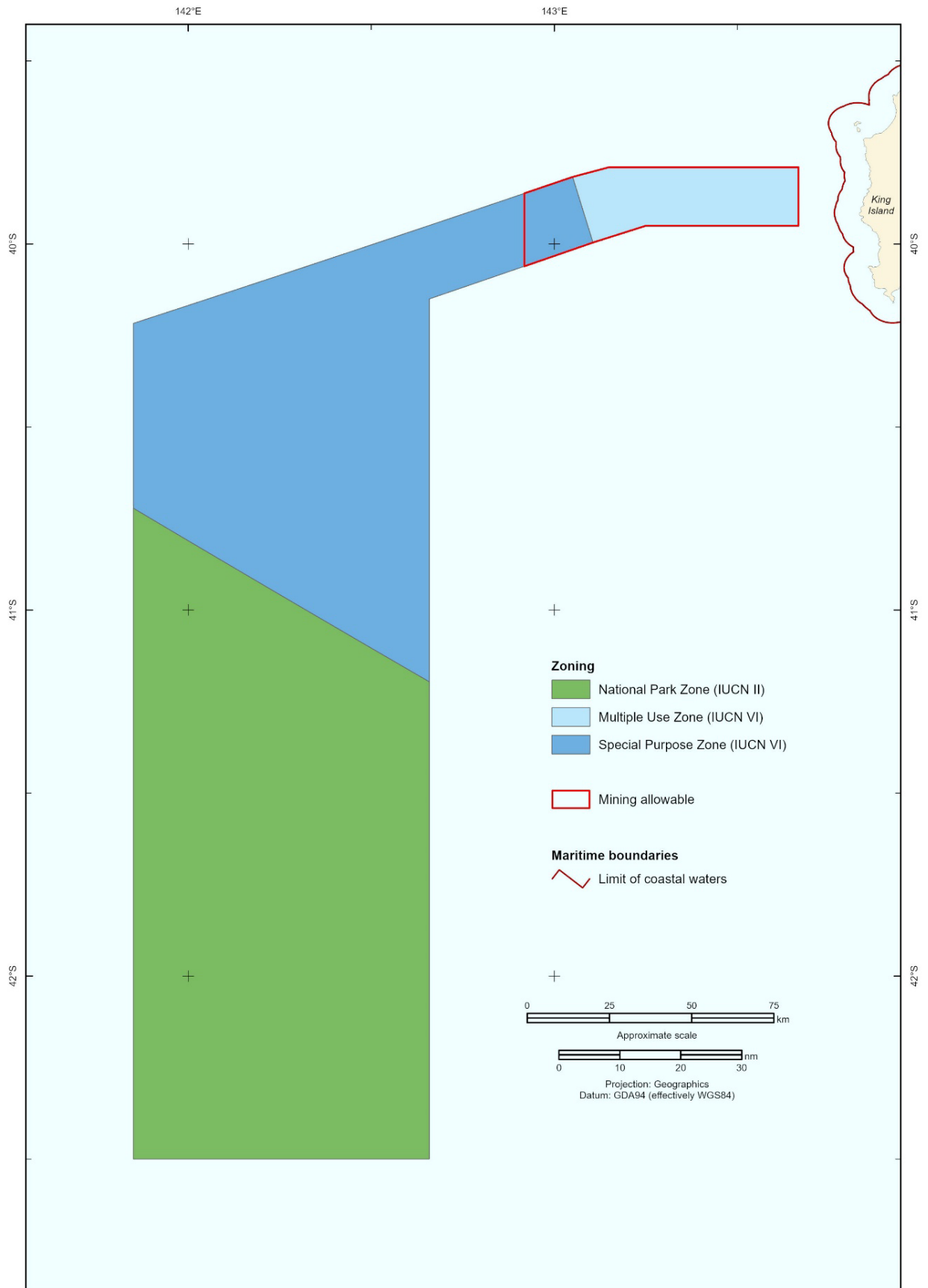
The Director of National Parks will continue to be a relevant person who must be consulted by a petroleum titleholder in preparation of an Environment Plan under the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009*, where the activity occurs outside the marine parks and has the potential to impact on marine park values.

Information on consultation requirements can be found in the NOPSEMA Guideline [Consultation with Commonwealth agencies with responsibilities in the marine area](#).

What about the construction and operation of pipelines?

The construction and operation of pipelines will be allowable in all zones, except for Sanctuary Zones (IUCN Ia), where alternative routes outside of the marine park are not feasible or practicable. Pipelines will be assessed by the Director of National Parks and authorised by activity licence.





Further Information

If you have questions, please visit the Australian Marine Parks website parksaustralia.gov.au/marine, or send an email to SEreview@dcceew.gov.au.