



Christmas Island Marine Park



Australian Government
Director of National Parks



Australian
Marine Parks



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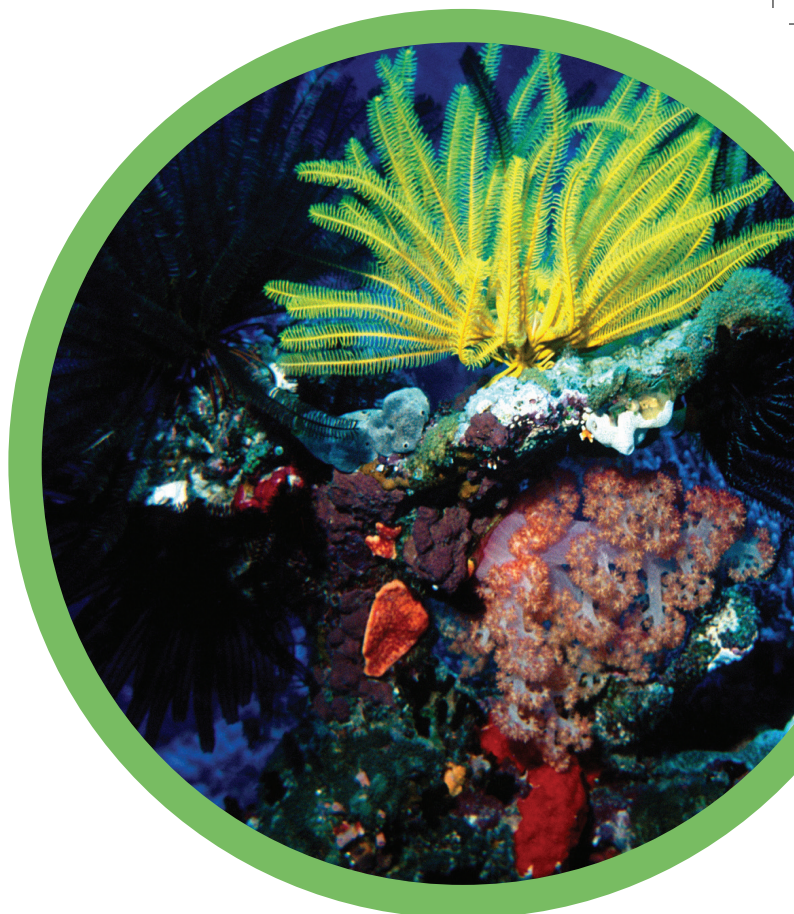
Christmas Island rises sharply from the deep surrounding tropical waters of the Indian Ocean to a height of 361 metres. It is often referred to as a natural wonder due to its stunning and significant natural environment which includes rainforests, surrounding clear azure waters and marine and terrestrial habitats and species of international conservation significance.

The location of Christmas Island, around 2600 kilometres north-west of Perth, makes it home to one of Australia's most remote communities. The ocean is a centrepiece of life for many community members, including those of Malay and Chinese heritage who maintain strong cultural traditions and connections to the surrounding marine environment.

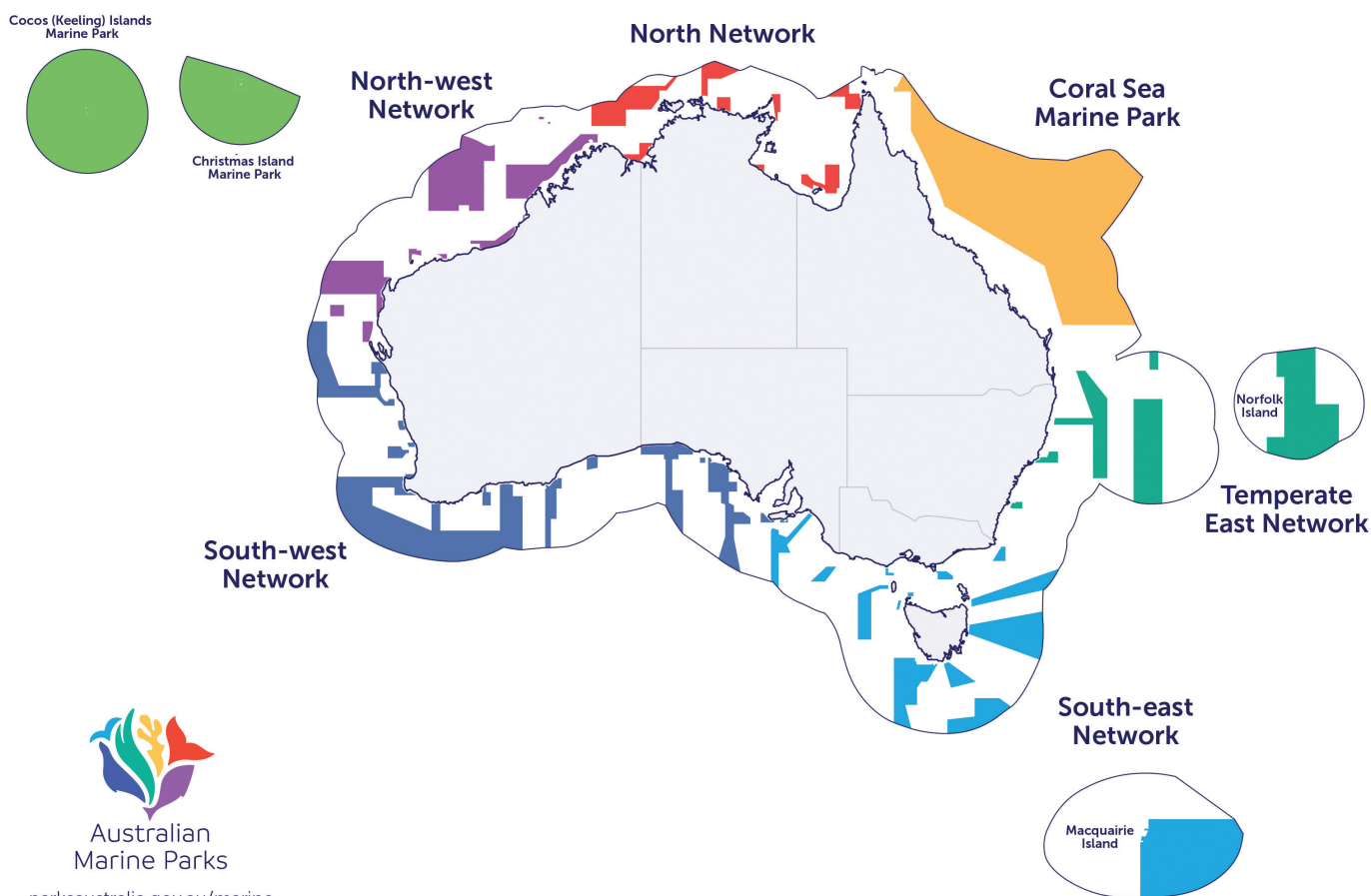


Christmas Island Marine Park

In 2022, the Christmas Island Marine Park was established by the Australian Government under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act*. It is one of 60 Australian Marine Parks that are managed by the Commonwealth Director of National Parks. Together, these parks are a key part of Australia's National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas. They cover and protect 45% of Australia's waters, making it one of the largest marine park networks on earth.



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Values of the Christmas Island Marine Park

Social and economic importance

Christmas Island Marine Park was co-designed with the local community as the marine environment is important for many social, cultural and economic reasons. The park's clear and warm tropical waters are valued by the community for commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing and other activities like boating, diving and snorkelling. It is also an attraction for many visitors which helps to support and promote the local tourism industry. Additionally, the unique marine environment of Christmas Island means there is potential for increasing scientific study and educational activities in the area.

Conservation significance

Christmas Island Marine Park is of international conservation significance, protecting 277,016 square kilometres of ocean and seafloor features. It provides habitats for a range of unique, migratory and threatened species in a region of the world where the ocean is facing increased environmental pressures. The marine park adjoins Christmas Island National Park, connecting and increasing protections across land and sea for species like seabirds which require both environments for their survival.

The tropical waters and fringing coral reefs that surround Christmas Island contain a mix of coral reef species from both the Indian and Pacific Oceans and over 680 species of fish have been recorded in the region. The overlap of these waters gives rise to varieties of hybrid marine fish and endemic species that are found nowhere else on earth. Christmas Island also has the world's greatest diversity and abundance of land crabs, most notably its famous red crab. The island's waters are essential for the crabs as they migrate to the coast to breed and release their eggs into the ocean. Other important inshore marine habitats include cave systems which support a mix of distinct species.

The offshore waters and habitats of Christmas Island Marine Park are relatively poorly studied. However, we know that they contain a range of unique seafloor features, habitats and species, particularly seamounts and deep-sea plains. Other marine areas are also considered to be biologically important. These include foraging areas for the endemic Abbott's Booby, Christmas Island Frigatebird and Golden booby and other seabirds that nest on Christmas Island, as well as whale shark feeding areas and southern bluefin tuna breeding habitat. The marine park also protects species like dolphins, deep sea fish and sharks that are or may be threatened elsewhere in the region.





Purpose and management priorities

The purpose of the Christmas Island Marine Park is to provide for:

- the protection and conservation of biodiversity and other natural, cultural and heritage values.
- ecologically sustainable use that supports positive social and economic outcomes.

Priorities for managing the Christmas Island Marine Park include:

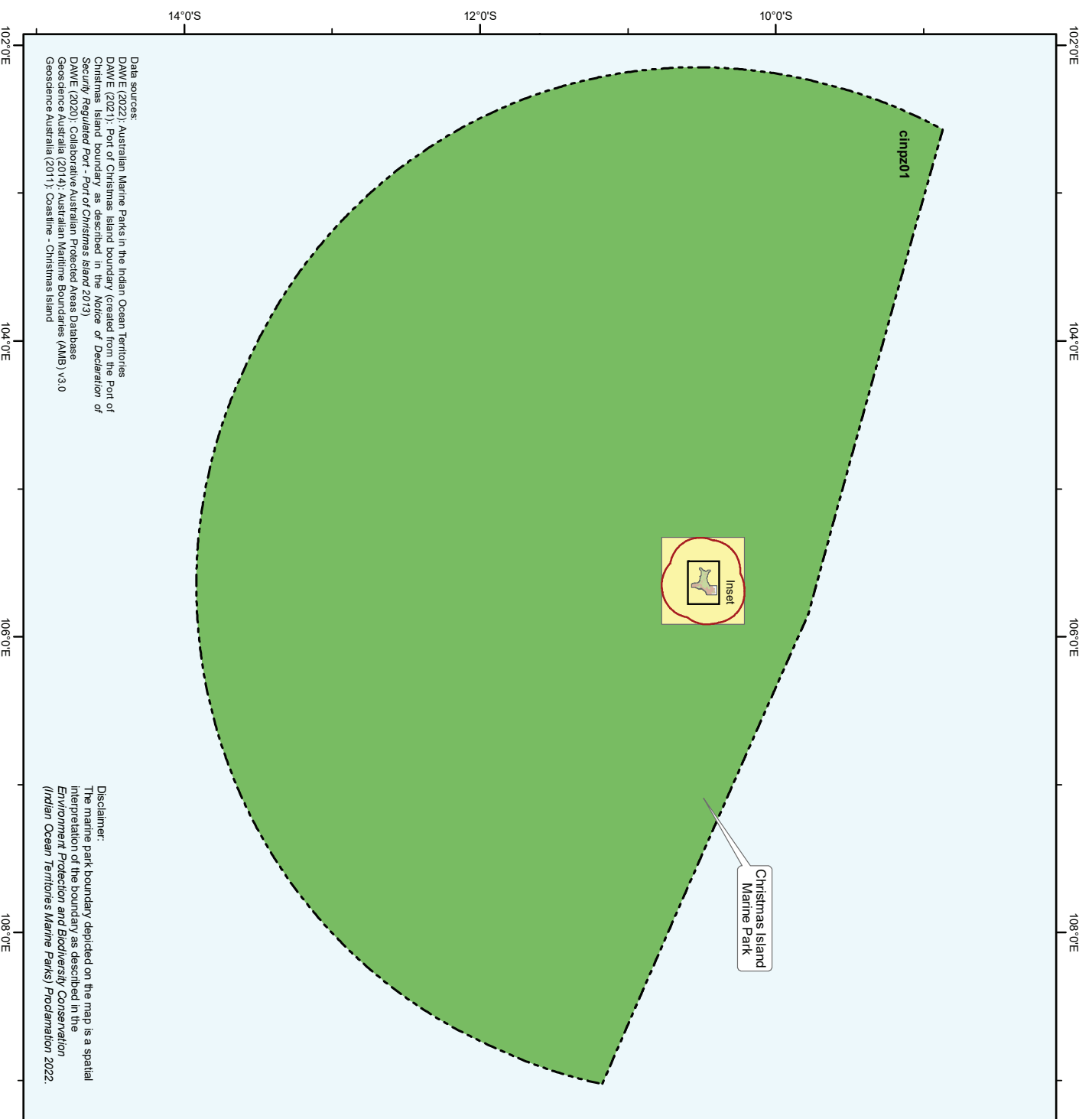
- working with the community, scientists, industry and other people to prepare a 10-year management plan.
- protecting, managing and monitoring the marine park's natural environment, including working with the community to do this.
- communicating and promoting greater understanding and appreciation of the marine park for the community and visitors.
- supporting sustainable use of the marine park by the community and tourists, including through high quality and safe natural and cultural tourism experiences.
- improving scientific knowledge and understanding of the marine park's natural environment, in both inshore and offshore waters.

Location and zoning of Christmas Island Marine Park

Christmas Island Marine Park covers an area of 277,016 square kilometres and extends from the island's shoreline to the limit of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), approximately 200 nautical miles from shore (except to the north of Christmas Island).

The park's offshore waters (from about 12 nautical miles from shore to the limit of the EEZ) are a green zone (National Park Zone) where extractive activities like fishing and mining are not allowed.

The marine park's inshore waters are a yellow zone (Habitat Protection Zone) where fishing is allowed but activities that disturb the seafloor (like mining or dredging) are not allowed. The marine park adjoins the marine boundary of Christmas Island National Park which extends 50 metres seaward from the island. Almost all the island's port is excluded from the marine park except for a very small and narrow part of the port's western boundary.







Data sources:
 DAVE (2022). Australian Marine Parks in the Indian Ocean Territories
 DAVE (2021). Port of Christmas Island boundary (created from the Port of
 Christmas Island boundary as described in the Advice of Declaration of
 Security Regulated Port - Port of Christmas Island 2015)
 DAVE (2020). Collaborative Australian Protected Areas Database
 Geoscience Australia (2015). Australian Marine Boundaries (AMB) v3.0
 Geoscience Australia (2011). Coastline - Christmas Island

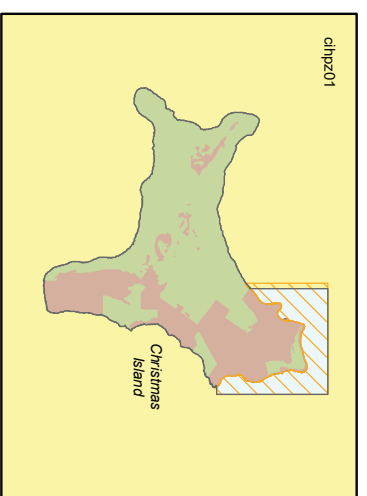
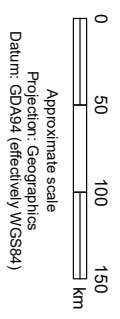
Disclaimer:
 The marine park boundary depicted on the map is a spatial
 interpretation of the boundary as described in the
 Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation
 (Indian Ocean Territories Marine Parks) Proclamation 2022.

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- Zoning**
-  National Park Zone (IUCN II)
 -  Habitat Protection Zone (IUCN IV)

- Other areas**
-  Port of Christmas Island
 -  Christmas Island National Park

- Maritime boundaries**
-  Limit of Australia's exclusive economic zone
 -  Territorial Sea Limit (approximately 12nm)





**For further information on Christmas Island Marine Park
and other Australian Marine Parks visit:**

parksaustralia.gov.au/marine

IMAGE CREDITS (in order of appearance):

Cover: Flying Fish Cove, Mark Fitz; Corals, Udo Van Dongen; Feather stars off the coast of Christmas Island, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment ; CINP Frigate Bird, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment; CINP Dolphins, Shaun Tierney; Whale shark feeding, Rob Hughes.



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