

South-west Marine Parks Advisory Committee

Meeting #1 Communique

21 May 2019, Perth

About the Committee

The inaugural meeting of the South-west Marine Parks Advisory Committee (SWMPAC) was held in Perth on Tuesday 21 May 2019.

This meeting marked the beginning of a two year term for the 14 newly appointed members.

Appointment of the SWMPAC represents an important step in implementing actions in the South-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan that came into effect 1 July 2018.

The role of the Committee is advisory, not regulatory, and will guide Parks Australia and the Director of National Parks on key aspects of marine park management. Individual members were selected from a large number of applicants who responded to a public expression of interest process open to all Australians last year.

Welcoming the new members

At the inaugural meeting, Parks Australia welcomed new members. They bring a wealth of experience from across the region on issues critical to marine park management including tourism, fishing, sea country values, science, conservation, governance and communications.

Member attendance

Bianca Priest (Chair)
Kirsty Alexander
Clare Cane
David Collard
Bronwyn Gillanders
Michael Heslewood
Lee Johnson
Tim Langlois
Melissa Nursey-Bray
Terry Romaro OAM
Sophie Teede
Stephen van Leeuwen
John Webber
Peter Owen (apology)
Gail Reynolds-Adamson (apology)

Whadjuk Elder Aunty May McGuire welcomed the members to Whadjuk country in the Noongar Nation.

Invited observers were from conservation and fisheries agencies in the West Australian and South Australian Governments.

The morning session focused on introducing new members to Australian Marine Parks, the South-west marine region and Parks Australia's management vision and objectives.

Presentations set the scene for a discussion with Members about the implementation of the South-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan.

Implementation Plan – Foundation

The key focus of the first meeting was the Foundation Phase Implementation Plan, which identifies management actions across the first 4 years of management (2018-2022).

Under each of the seven programs advice from Committee members was sought on:

- subject or location specific management needs and opportunities;
- relevant work and programs recently completed, underway or planned that can inform park management; and
- marine park user/stakeholder information needs and engagement opportunities.

Communication, Education and Awareness Program

Suggestions focused around actions to improve awareness, understanding and support for marine parks and park management such as improvements to online platforms and apps. Discussions also highlighted the roles that partner organisations could play in getting messages out to stakeholders and the general public.

Tourism and Visitor Experience Program

Discussions supported actions to provide for and promote a range of environmentally appropriate, high-quality recreation and tourism experiences. Attendance at regional tourism events and raising awareness of marine parks and Aboriginal cultural values in tourism experiences were some of the ideas discussed.

Indigenous Engagement Program

Opportunities to recognise and respect the ongoing cultural responsibilities of Aboriginal people to care for sea country were discussed, including Aboriginal cultural awareness training and support for future Noongar forums in the south-west.

Marine Science Program

Awareness of actions underway to improve knowledge and understanding of marine park values and pressures was discussed, including the Australian Marine Parks Science Atlas atlas.parksaustralia.gov.au/amps

Assessments and Authorisations Program

Parks Australia's approach to authorising activities in marine parks was discussed, including options to raise awareness among tour operators and researchers of the requirements for undertaking tourism or research in marine parks. Information about Parks Australia's authorisations – permits, class approvals, and activity licences and leases is available at: onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/australian-marine-parks

Parks Protection and Management Program

The Committee heard about work underway to by Park's Australia to provide guidance on moorings in marine parks. Also, they discussed opportunities for engagement in management activities such as marine debris monitoring and removal.

Compliance Program

Discussions focused around actions to support voluntary compliance by marine parks users. Parks Australia apply a risk based approach to developing the annual South-west Network compliance plan.

Next Meeting

The next Committee meeting is likely to be held in Adelaide in late 2019. For more information about the South-west Marine Parks Network or the Committee:

Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/south-west

Email marineparks@environment.gov.au