



Australian  
Marine Parks

# Commercial fishing in Australian Marine Parks



**From 1 July 2018, new management plans for Australian Marine Parks are in effect. The five new plans cover 44 Australian Marine Parks located in Commonwealth waters, 3 to 200 nautical miles from the coastline.**

The five new management plans together with maps and zoning, can be accessed on the Parks Australia website: [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](https://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine).

All commercial fishers who currently fish, or intend to fish, within these areas need to be aware of the new management arrangements.

## Class approvals

Commercial fishing is authorised in Australian Marine Parks by a class approval for each management plan, which can be accessed on the Parks Australia website: [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](https://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine).

Class approvals set out the areas where commercial fishing can occur, the fishing methods that can be used, and the conditions that need to be followed while operating or transiting through Australian Marine Parks. They simplify regulation of marine parks by authorising a group of people undertaking the same activity, rather than requiring individual permits or licences.

The class approvals were developed through a consultative process with fisheries management agencies, peak industry groups and fishery associations around the country. They are based on an existing class approval for the South-east Network of Marine Parks, located around Tasmania and Victoria, which has been in place since 2013.

## Frequently asked questions

### *What is a zone and when do the rules come into effect?*

Zones are areas of a marine park that have specific management rules. Different zone types allow different types of activity. While 'green' zones do not allow any fishing, 'yellow' and 'blue' zones allow some types of commercial fishing. The new zones come into effect on 1 July 2018.

### *What is the approach to compliance from 1 July 2018?*

We aim to contact all commercial licence holders that operate in or near Australian Marine Parks to inform them of the new management requirements. Parks Australia understands it may take time for new rules to be understood and not all fishers will be aware of the rules, which start on 1 July 2018.

From 1 July 2018, Parks Australia will focus on increasing awareness of Australian Marine Parks and the requirements within the class approvals, to help commercial fishers comply with the new rules.

Parks Australia will investigate potential non-compliance in Australian Marine Parks, where there is evidence of wilful or deliberate non-compliance.

### *Do I need to apply to be on the class approval?*

You don't need to apply to be covered by the class approval. The only requirement is that you hold a fishing concession or licence issued by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority or a state or Northern Territory fisheries agency.

### *Are there any costs to commercially fish in an Australian Marine Park?*

No additional charges apply.

### ***How do I access maps and electronic files of the marine park boundaries?***

They can be accessed at [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine) by following the links to 'maps'. Maps of marine park networks and individual marine parks are available, including Shapefiles, MIF files and KML files which can be downloaded to use on vessel hardware. If you have any difficulty with these electronic files or require a different file format, please contact [marineparks@environment.gov.au](mailto:marineparks@environment.gov.au).

### ***How do I comply with the class approval?***

Responsibility for compliance with the class approvals ultimately lies with the concession or licence holder and those that have operational control of the fishing vessel. You must ensure that you are aware of and understand the requirements of the class approval, including:

- knowing the areas where you can and can't fish
- keeping a hard or electronic copy of the class approval on board each vessel
- keeping a navigational chart of the marine park boundaries that is relevant to your fishing operations on board each vessel
- undertaking commercial fishing in accordance with the relevant fishery management plan and the requirements of your individual fishing concession / licence (for example, fishery closures and speed restrictions).

### ***What are the rules about transiting through zones?***

Transiting is allowed through all zone types, but you are required to:

- keep all fishing gear stowed and secured while transiting a zone in which your fishing method is not allowed
- travel at more than 5 knots through National Park Zones (green zones).

### ***What does stowed and secured mean?***

Stowed and secured is defined in the class approval and means that that all fishing gear is inoperative, inboard the vessel and completely out of the water.

### ***What are the rules about anchoring?***

Commercial fishing vessels are allowed to anchor in all zone types except National Park Zones (green zones). If stopping and anchoring within a zone where your gear type is not allowed, your gear must be stowed and secured.

### ***Are there any restrictions on when I process fish or move fish to another ship (tranship)?***

Yes. You can only process or tranship fish in zones where your fishing method is allowed. This is for compliance purposes, to ensure that park surveillance officers are clear on when fish is and isn't being taken.

However, exceptions can be made for individual circumstances, where this rule creates site specific operational constraints on normal fishing activities. Any exceptions need to be authorised by the Director of National Parks. Please contact [marineparks@environment.gov.au](mailto:marineparks@environment.gov.au).

### ***Do I need to get a vessel monitoring system (VMS) unit?***

No. As of 1 July, it is not a compulsory requirement to have a VMS unit fitted to your vessel to operate in an Australian Marine Park. Any VMS requirements are in accordance with your fishery management arrangements.

### ***What is the Australian Marine Parks alert service?***

The alert service is a free tool delivered by Parks Australia, aimed at avoiding non-compliance in Australian Marine Parks. When a vessel enters a marine park where the nominated primary gear type is not allowed, an alert message is sent via email to an onboard computer and/or as an SMS message to a nominated phone number, alerting that no fishing is allowed.

### ***What do I do if my fishing gear drifts into an Australian Marine Park where it is not allowed?***

There is no allowable level of gear drift into zones where the given gear type is not allowed. All potential unlawful fishing activity, including accidental gear drift, will be investigated. You are encouraged to cater for the prevailing weather conditions and currents when setting gear close to zone boundaries, to avoid gear drifting into a marine park and fishing unlawfully.

It is best if you are open and honest if your gear does accidentally drift into areas where it is not allowed. You are strongly advised to call the Parks Australia duty phone number (0419 293 465) as soon as you are aware of the situation.

### ***Can I fish recreationally from a commercial fishing vessel while in an Australian Marine Park?***

The requirements of your fishing concession / licence and fishery management plans apply in relation to recreational fishing. If your fishery management arrangements allow for recreational fishing from your commercial vessel, then it can be undertaken in accordance with the class approval.

### ***What are the arrangements for charter fishing and aquaculture operations?***

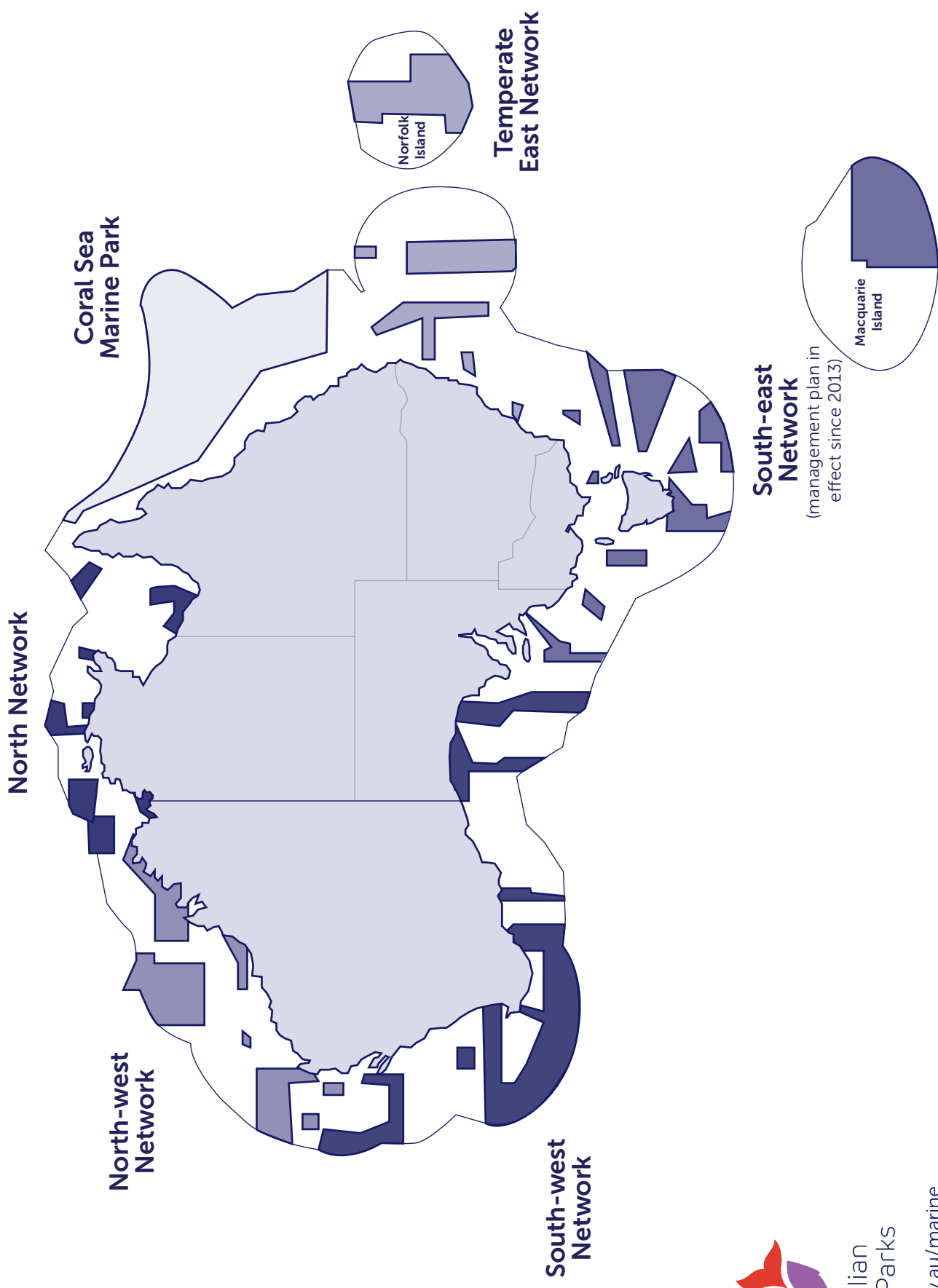
Charter fishing and aquaculture activities are not included in the commercial fishing class approval. An individual licence is required for these activities, which can be applied for online. Please visit our website for further information: [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine).

### ***What are the provisions for cage towing in the South-west Marine Parks Network?***

The class approval for the South-west Network allows cage towing through all zones except Marine National Park Zones (green zones). There is one exception, which is the Marine National Park Zone of Western Kangaroo Island Marine Park, where vessels engaged in cage towing can travel at speeds less than 5 knots.

# Australian Marine Parks managed by Parks Australia

(Management plans in effect from 1 July 2018)



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[parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine)

## Australian Marine Parks

Australian Marine Parks are managed by Parks Australia on behalf of the Director of National Parks. The following management plans are in effect from 1 July 2018:

- **Coral Sea Marine Park Management Plan 2018**  
(consisting of the Coral Sea Marine Park)
- **Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018**  
(consisting of Gifford, Solitary Islands, Norfolk, Cod Grounds, Lord Howe, Hunter, Central Eastern and Jervis marine parks)
- **South-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018**  
(consisting of Abrolhos, Eastern Recherche, Jurien, Twilight, Two Rocks, Great Australian Bight, Perth Canyon, Murat, Geographe, Western Eyre, Bremer, Western Kangaroo Island, South-west Corner, Southern Kangaroo Island marine parks)
- **North-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018**  
(consisting of Kimberley, Dampier, Cartier Island, Montebello, Ashmore Reef, Mermaid Reef, Gascoyne, Ningaloo, Argo–Rowley Terrace, Carnarvon Canyon, Roebuck, Shark Bay, Eighty Mile Beach marine parks)
- **North Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018**  
(consisting of West Cape York, Arnhem, Arafura, Limmen, Oceanic Shoals, Wessel, Joseph Bonaparte Gulf).

The South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan (2013) is already in effect for the:

- **South-east Marine Parks Network**  
(consisting of Apollo, Beagle, Boags, East Gippsland, Flinders, Franklin, Freycinet, Huon, Macquarie Island, Murray, Nelson, South Tasman Rise, Tasman Fracture and Zeehan marine parks).

## Further information

If you have questions regarding commercial fishing, please visit the Australian Marine Parks website [parksaustralia.gov.au/marine](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/marine), email us at [marineparks@environment.gov.au](mailto:marineparks@environment.gov.au) or call 1800 069 352.



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