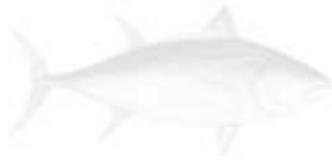




Australian Government
Director of National Parks



Natural Heritage Trust
Helping Communities Helping Australia
An Australian Government Initiative



Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters)



M A N A G E M E N T P L A N
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Summary for Park Users



GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT MARINE PARK (COMMONWEALTH WATERS) MANAGEMENT PLAN 2005 — 2012



Introduction

The Great Australian Bight Marine Park is made up of two adjoining marine parks established by the Australian and South Australian governments. The South Australian Marine Park, in the State (coastal) waters of the Bight, consists of a Whale Sanctuary Zone and Conservation Zone. The **Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) (the Park)** is made up of a Marine Mammal Protection Zone and a Benthic Protection Zone (see map).

Although the Australian and South Australian governments manage the Great Australian Bight Marine Park cooperatively, each jurisdiction has its own management plan to manage the day-to-day uses of their respective components of the Park. This brochure refers only to the portion of the marine park that is in Commonwealth Waters.

The Australian Government has released the **Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters) Management Plan 2005–2012**. This is the second plan for the Park and will last for seven years until 2012. This brochure explains how

the Management Plan aims to protect the values of the Park through regulating activities that may threaten the Park's values.

For information relating to uses of the South Australian portion of the Marine Park refer to the Management Plan for South Australia which can be accessed on the internet at:

http://www.parks.sa.gov.au/pdfs/gabmp_management_planA.pdf

What does the Park Protect?

The Park was established in 1998 to protect the unique habitats and key species of the Bight. In particular, the Park protects:

- Habitat for the southern right whale
- Habitat for the Australian Sea-lion
- Habitat for other species of conservation significance (such as the great white shark, dolphins, albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds)
- A representative section of benthic (seafloor) habitat and its associated species.

In order to better protect these values, the Park is divided into two zones, the Marine Mammal Protection Zone and Benthic Protection Zone. These zones have been set up to allow different rules to be applied to each zone, according to the level of protection required.

The waters of the Bight contain unique plants, animals and sediments found

nowhere else in the world. The Benthic Protection Zone has been established to protect the benthic (seafloor) habitat and the unique species that live there.

The Head of Bight is a significant breeding and calving area for the endangered southern right whale. The Australian Sea-lion also breeds in colonies at the base of the Bunda Cliffs. The Marine Mammal Protection Zone protects the habitat of the southern right whale and Australian Sea-lion, and other species that utilise the area for feeding and breeding. The Marine Mammal Protection Zone abuts and complements the Conservation and Sanctuary Zones of the State Marine Park.

The Management Plan protects these conservation values by regulating activities that may have a negative impact on them.

What is a Management Plan?

All parks and reserves established by the Australian Government are declared under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The EPBC Act is law designed to protect Australia's natural resources and provides the Australian Government with the means to develop and manage protected areas. The EPBC Act prohibits certain activities being undertaken in a Commonwealth reserve except in accordance with a management plan. Therefore, without a management plan, activities, such as fishing, would not be allowed in the Park.

In addition to the EPBC Act, the EPBC Regulations provide additional controls on a range of activities in Commonwealth reserves including the use of vehicles and vessels, littering, commercial fishing, recreational fishing and research. As with the EPBC Act, the Regulations prohibit many of these activities unless a management plan allows the activity. In many cases, park users will need a permit to carry out certain activities.

The EPBC Act and Regulations impose civil and criminal penalties for offences such as entering prohibited areas or conducting prohibited activities within the Park.

A management plan is a means of effectively regulating the uses of the Park. In addition to its primary role in providing for the protection and conservation of the Park's values, a management plan is the only way to allow certain uses of the Park that would otherwise be prohibited.

Structure of the Management Plan

The Management Plan is a legal document, which provides the Government with the ability to protect the Park's resources.

The following briefly describes how the Management Plan is structured.

The Management Plan consists of two parts. Part 1 explains the context of managing the Park, including the legal context. Part 2 sets out how the Park

will be managed. Part 2 is divided into chapters that set out how activities in the Park will be controlled. The chapters cover the following topics:

- Zoning and IUCN categories
- Natural heritage management
- Visitor management and Park use
- Stakeholders and partnerships
- Business management

Most chapters in Part 2 contain the following:

- Aims that describe the desired result of park management activity
- Performance indicators that can be used to measure whether management of the Park is effective in achieving the aims
- Background that explains why the chapter is needed
- Prescriptions that set out controls on activities in the Park and strategies for managing the Park

The role of the Government

The Australian Government has a role to administer, manage and control uses of the Park. This management is the responsibility of the Director of National Parks (the Director). When a Park is declared, the Director is responsible for preparing a management plan for the Park. The Director has certain obligations under the Management Plan. These obligations include:

- Consulting with stakeholders on issues relating to the management of the Park



- Assessing and issuing permits for commercial operations and scientific research in the Park
- Regulating uses of the Park including prosecuting for offences under relevant State and Commonwealth laws
- Monitoring uses of the Park and threats to its conservation values
- Facilitating and implementing marine species recovery plans and threat abatement plans
- Carrying out surveillance of the Park
- Providing Park users with information about the Park
- Developing and funding research programs

Photo Credits:

Background line drawings left to right:
Southern bluefin tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*)
School shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*)
Orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
– Fisheries Global Information system (FIGIS)

Background image bottom:
Southern right whale cows with calves: Mandy Watson

Small images left to right:
1. Benthic life: Ib Svane, SARDI
2. Fishing boat leaving Port Lincoln: AFMA
3. Head of Bight viewing platform: Paul Anderson, DEH
4. Australian Sea-lion: Australian Heritage Photo Library

Summary of the Rules

The following table outlines what activities can and can't be undertaken in each zone of the Park.

	Marine Mammal Protection Zone (MMPZ)	Benthic Protection Zone (BPZ)
	<i>The MMPZ protects the habitat of the southern right whale and Australian Sea-lion, and other species that utilise the area for feeding and breeding</i>	<i>The BPZ protects the benthic (seafloor) habitat and the unique species that live there</i>
Commercial Fishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Demersal (bottom) trawling not permitted at any time. - Requires a permit issued by the Director of National Parks and a fishing concession granted by the Australian or South Australian governments. - Only fisheries listed in Box 1 of the Management Plan are permitted. - Permit holders may be required to provide data as a condition of the permit. - Nets or any associated equipment used for trawling must not come into contact with the seabed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited in the overlap with the MMPZ from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Demersal (bottom) trawling not permitted at any time. - Requires a permit issued by the Director of National Parks and a fishing concession granted by the Australian or South Australian governments. - Only fisheries listed in Box 1 of the Management Plan are permitted. - Permit holders may be required to provide data as a condition of the permit. - Nets or any associated equipment used for trawling must not come into contact with the seabed.
Recreational Fishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Permitted at all other times provided that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) it is not undertaken using underwater breathing apparatus; and b) fish are not caught using equipment other than lines, hooks and lures; and c) live bait or native species, other than a species of fish, are not used as bait; and d) a fishing line is not left unattended; and e) cleaning and filleting is not undertaken in a marine area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited in the overlap with the MMPZ from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Permitted at all other times (all other MMPZ rules apply).
Mining Operations	Prohibited at all times.	May be carried on in accordance with approval from the Governor-General, applicable provisions of the EPBC Act and other applicable laws, based on a strict case-by-case assessment.
Scientific Activities	Requires a permit issued by the Director of National Parks and/or Minister for the Environment and Heritage.	Requires a permit issued by the Director of National Parks and/or Minister for the Environment and Heritage.
Other Commercial Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Requires permit issued by the Director of National Parks. 	Requires permit issued by the Director of National Parks.
Access to Vessels	Prohibited from 1 May to 31 October inclusive except by permit issued by the Director of National Parks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prohibited in the overlap with the MMPZ from 1 May to 31 October inclusive. - Permitted at all other times.
Access to Aircraft	<p>May operate in accordance with Commonwealth laws except in the presence of a cetacean (whales and dolphins), in which case the following applies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) must not operate at a height lower than 300 metres (1000 feet) within a horizontal radius of 300 metres of a cetacean; and b) must not approach a cetacean from head on; and c) if the aircraft can land on water, must not land on water to observe a cetacean; and d) if a cetacean being observed shows signs of being disturbed, the aircraft must immediately be withdrawn (examples of signs of disturbance – immediate or repeated dives and increased swimming speed); and e) if the aircraft is a helicopter it must stay at least 1000 metres away from a cetacean; and must not hover over a cetacean. 	May operate in accordance with Commonwealth laws (MMPZ cetacean rules apply).

This table is intended as a quick reference guide only. Anyone wishing to conduct any operation in the Park should refer to the Management Plan. Commercial operators are advised to contact their industry representatives and the GABMP manager for further details.

For further information contact:

Further information on the Great Australian Bight Marine Park (Commonwealth Waters), including the Management Plan and information on the values and resources of the Park, can be found on the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage website at: www.deh.gov.au/coasts/mpa/gab

Park Administration

Park Manager 0418 855 992
 Canberra office (02) 6274 1062
 Email: gabplan@deh.gov.au

To report an accidental interaction with, or if you witness someone intentionally interfering with, a protected species in a Commonwealth area call 1800 803 772

