

Community based sustainable fishing education project

Marine Parks and Recreational Fishing

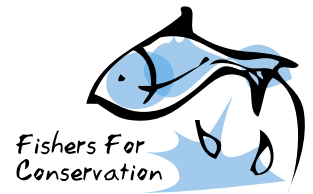
What do Marine Parks mean for our fishing future?

Worldwide marine environments and fisheries are in decline and recent scientific studies have warned about the dire situation facing our marine environments. A recent study published in the journal *Science* predicts that if current trends continue all commercial fish and seafood species will collapse (meaning their catch will have declined by 90 percent) by 2048. The majority of marine scientists agree that Marine Parks can help conserve biodiversity and protect marine environments into the future.

What are the benefits of Marine Parks?

Scientific studies have identified a number of benefits from Marine Parks including:

- **More fish!** For most species of fish and crustaceans, more and/or larger fish have been recorded in and around established Marine Parks. This is due to:
 - **Protecting breeding stock**, spawning and/or nursery sites. The companion FFC Info Sheet #2 *Why Should We Sometimes Let the Big Ones Go?* provides more detail on the importance of Marine Parks for protecting fishing sustainability.
 - **Protection of healthy habitat** and diverse ecosystem structures. Studies have shown increases in the numbers, biomass, diversity and productivity of fish and other organisms in and around Marine Parks.
 - **The 'spillover' effect** where adult fish, juvenile fish and fish eggs and larvae from within the Park area move out and repopulate other areas.
 - **Reduced risk of extinction.** The direct protection for individuals, and the diversity of healthy marine systems protected in Marine Parks, lead to reduced risk of extinction of threatened and vulnerable species, and more fish overall.
- **Improved engagement and education** of the community concerning issues of marine conservation.



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- **Stability and an 'insurance policy' for marine life.** Marine Parks aim to provide the best conditions for diverse and healthy marine ecosystems. Such areas are healthy and give the system the best possible chance of recovery from natural and human impacts. Marine Parks provide a core from which even areas outside of the Park can recover. Marine Parks act as an 'insurance policy' for delicate marine systems.
- **Scientific reference sites** such as those found in Marine Parks are needed for the study and evaluation of threats to biodiversity, fish and fishing.



Recreational and commercial fishing will be allowed in most of the area within SA's Marine Parks. 'Habitat protection' and 'General managed use' zones allow both recreational and commercial fishing. For recreational fishers, Normal size and bag limits will apply. Smaller 'sanctuary' zones restrict all extractive uses including fishing but will still be open to activities like boating, swimming or diving.

Potential problems with implementing Marine Parks

- **Lack of acceptance by marine stakeholders** – if Marine Parks are not designed with the fishing community (and other stakeholders) in mind, they will not be accepted and effective.
- **Economic considerations** – fishing restrictions can impact on fishing tourism and commercial catches. In the long term, Marine Parks are likely to have positive effects on the stability and size of fish catches and tourism. In the short term, restrictions may require changes to fishing behaviour and have short term impacts on some businesses.
- **Marine Parks cannot work by themselves** – without a coordinated, ecosystem based approach to management of marine environments, including fisheries, isolated Marine Parks may be ineffective.
- **Marine Park design** – protected areas that are poorly placed, too small, or subject to negative impacts from activities outside of the Park area can be ineffective.

How will SA Marine Parks affect you?

The Marine Parks Bill allows for the establishment of 'Multiple use' Marine Parks. These parks will feature a number of different zones within the Marine Park borders. **Recreational fishing will be allowed as normal in most of the Marine Park area** - the 'General managed use' and 'Habitat protection' zones. 'Sanctuary zones' will form the core of the protection and will restrict all fishing and other 'extractive' uses. Sanctuary zones will form only a small part of the total park area. 'Special purpose areas' and 'Restricted areas' will also restrict recreational fishing, but will be very small areas having little impact on fishing.

What should recreational fishers be doing about Marine Parks?

- Marine Park managers can't ensure continued access to your favourite fishing spots if they don't know where they are. Complaining about not being able to access your favourite areas after the zoning plans are produced is not going to be as effective as pointing out these areas early, and maybe even suggesting other areas, with similar values, that could be protected without impacting on your fishing.



On 20 November 2007, the Marine Parks Bill 2007 was passed by the South Australian Parliament. A key target within the South Australian Government's Strategic Plan is the establishment of 19 Marine Parks by 2010.

- As a local fisher you know plenty about the marine life in your area. Sharing this information will lead to better outcomes for you and the marine environment.
- In the long term a Marine Park in your region will mean better fishing and more stability of catches from season to season. Interstate and overseas experience indicates that concerned fishers, some of whom initially oppose Marine Parks, become their greatest champions a few years down the track when the benefits become apparent.

How can I participate in the Marine Parks Process?

- **Be well informed** – check www.ffc.org.au for the latest info on the process and to find links to other sources for information on Marine Parks.
- A summary of the official channels for consultation is available on the Government web site www.environment.sa.gov.au/coasts/marineparks.html
- **Sign up to the official stakeholder emailing list;** marineDEH@saugov.sa.gov.au, or call (08) 8124 4900
- **Attend public meetings** - check the FFC site and Government mailing list for details of these.
- **Join your local regional consultative committee.** The Encounter Marine Park Regional Consultative Committee has already been formed - Committees for other areas will be formed shortly. Become a part of your local committee, or attend meetings and talk to members of your local committee.
- **Let FFC help you** – we are here to help you as a recreational fisher. Contact us with your concerns and we will do what we can to help and represent you. Our members can help you to protect both your fishing and the environment that fishing depends on.



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Recreational Fishing Community Grants Programme



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