

2021 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SA'S MARINE PARKS COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT

JANUARY 2022

yourSAy



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) sought community views through YourSAy from 19 November 2021 to 31 December 2021 for the second round of amendments to the South Australian (SA) marine parks network (termed the '2021 Proposed Amendments'). The initial marine park amendment consultation occurred between May and July 2020. Feedback received through the 2020 consultation indicated a second round of consultation was required to finalise the outcomes.

This report provides the results of the second consultation that proposed the following amendments:

1. **Nuyts Archipelago Marine Park** – A 2021 Proposed Amendment to reinstate the original boundaries of the Isles of St Francis Sanctuary Zone with a Special Purpose Area overlaid in the north east region to allow for commercial abalone fishing only.
2. **Neptune Islands Group (Ron and Valerie Taylor) Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to revise the North Neptune Islands Sanctuary Zone with a north east extension to the outer boundaries of the marine park.
3. **Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to reinstate the original boundaries of Clinton Wetlands Sanctuary Zone with the inclusion of a Special Purpose Area about 2km SW of Port Arthur to allow shore-based recreational line fishing.
4. **Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to add a new sanctuary zone at D'Estrees Bay with a Special Purpose Area that allows for shore based recreational line fishing.

A total of 78 submissions were received in response to the 2021 Proposed Amendments. This comprised 51 direct emails and 27 YourSAy discussion board posts. The majority of responses received (62%, n=68) were in regards to the proposed new sanctuary zone at D'Estrees Bay in the Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park. Of these responses 93% (n=63) were opposed to the proposed amendment. The main reasons for opposition to the D'Estrees Bay proposal were:

- Recreational fishers are not a sufficient threat to warrant exclusion and were under-represented in the consultation process
- The location of the sanctuary zone would create a safety hazard by forcing small boats into more dangerous waters to access fishing grounds
- Proposed change would have negative impacts on community, economy, tourism and home/shack value
- There was a lack of public consultation at a local level creating a sense that locals were being 'locked out'
- The creation of a sanctuary zone was not supported by sufficient scientific evidence to demonstrate benefits.



The remaining 42 responses were distributed evenly (12-15%) across the three other 2021 Proposed Amendments. Of these, majority support was observed for North Neptune Islands (8 support vs. 4 oppose) and Clinton Wetlands Sanctuary Zones (9 support vs. 4 oppose). Majority opposition was recorded for Isles of St Francis (4 support vs. 12 oppose).

Submissions were received from several peak stakeholder bodies.

- RecFish SA were opposed to the amendments proposed for Nuyts Archipelago and Southern KI Marine Parks, and in favour of amendments proposed for Neptune Islands Group and Upper Gulf St Vincent.
- The Ministers Recreational Fishing Advisory Council were opposed to the amendments proposed for Nuyts Archipelago, Neptune Islands Group and Southern KI Marine Parks, and in favour of amendments proposed for Upper Gulf St Vincent.
- A joint submission supporting all proposed amendments was received from the Conservation Council of SA, the SA Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishermen's Association, The Wilderness Society SA, SA Abalone Industry, Wildcatch Fisheries SA and the PEW Charitable Trusts.



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The South Australian Government (the government) is committed to maintaining South Australia's network of marine parks and revising the current sanctuary (no take) zone boundaries.

In 2018, the government commissioned an [independent review \(External link\)](#) of marine park Sanctuary Zones (SZs), taking into consideration the economic, social and environmental values held by regional communities and the commercial and recreational fishing sectors.

The review demonstrated that while the 2013 marine parks buyback program had removed displaced fishing effort at a fisheries level, there were still some important fishing areas lost to commercial fishers and concern from the industry that some SZs are having an impact on their operations.

Following consultation between the commercial fishing, recreational fishing and conservation sectors during 2019, the government proposed amendments to six marine park SZs. In addition, the government proposed to expand the outer boundaries of two marine parks to facilitate the management of three new areas; Windara shellfish reef, Glenelg metro shellfish reef, and the Port Stanvac restricted access area.

Between May and July 2020, all proposed changes underwent a six week period of public consultation ([public consultation report, appendices](#)).

After considering feedback received through the consultation process, the Minister for Environment and Water adopted a set of management plan amendments on 14 September 2020, and the marine park boundary changes were proclaimed on 17 September 2020. The amendments were then authorized by the Governor and tabled in Parliament on 22 September 2020 (these are termed the '2020 Amendments').

The Parliamentary process is complete for two of the six 2020 amendments and the following changes came into effect on 1 January 2021:

- Upper South East Marine Park Management Plan - shore based recreational line fishing is now allowed in the Coorong Beach South Sanctuary Zone
- Encounter Marine Park Management Plan - the northern boundary has been extended to create a new sanctuary zone at Port Stanvac and new zoning has been created around the Metropolitan Shellfish Reef at Glenelg.

The Parliamentary process was not completed for the 2020 Proposed Amendments affecting the following marine parks and sanctuary zones:

- Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park; adjusting the boundaries of Clinton Wetlands Sanctuary Zone (SZ-1) and creating a new Windara Reef Sanctuary Zone (SZ-5) with a special purpose area to allow recreational fishing
- Nuyts Archipelago Marine Park; altering the boundaries of Nuyts Reef Sanctuary Zone (SZ-1) and Isles of St Francis Sanctuary Zone (SZ-8)
- Neptune Islands (Ron and Valerie Taylor) Marine Park; altering the boundaries of North Neptune Island Sanctuary Zone (SZ-1)
- Western Kangaroo Island Marine Park, altering the boundaries of Cape du Couedic Sanctuary Zone (SZ-3).

To resolve the Parliamentary process, the government encouraged further discussions between the peak South Australian stakeholders to seek a fair balance between their interests. Taking into account feedback from these discussions a package of revised management plan amendments was developed for public consultation.

These revised management plan amendments termed the '2021 Proposed Amendments' do not replace the 2020 Proposed Amendments but will modify some of the changes proposed in 2020. The 2021 Proposed Amendments (and the 2020 Proposed Amendments that remain unchanged) are summarised here:

- **Nuyts Archipelago Marine Park** – A 2021 Proposed Amendment to maintain the original boundaries of the Isles of St Francis Sanctuary Zone with a Special Purpose Area overlaid in the north east region to allow for commercial abalone fishing only. The 2020 Proposed Amendment to increase the size of Nuyts Reef Sanctuary Zone is maintained.
- **Neptune Islands Group (Ron and Valerie Taylor) Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to revise the North Neptune Islands Sanctuary Zone with a north east extension to the outer boundaries of the marine park.
- **Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to maintain the original boundaries of Clinton Wetlands Sanctuary Zone with the inclusion of a Special Purpose Area about 2km SW of Port Arthur to allow shore-based recreational line fishing. The 2020 Proposed Amendment to include Windara shellfish reef within the marine park is maintained.
- **Western Kangaroo Island Marine Park** - The 2020 Proposed Amendment to decrease the size of Cape du Couedic Sanctuary Zone is maintained.
- **Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park** - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to add a new sanctuary zone at D'Estrees Bay with a Special Purpose Area that allows for shore based recreational line fishing.

This report summarises the public feedback received on the four 2021 Proposed Amendments to the state's marine parks network. Feedback received on the three 2020 Proposed Amendments that will be maintained can be found [here](#).

METHODS

A public submission is defined as a unique email or YourSAy discussion board comment. Emails and YourSAy discussion board comments were considered a 'submission' if they specifically addressed the proposed amendments. Submissions that did not specifically refer to a particular amendment were not used in the statistical analysis but their comments were catalogued and can be produced upon request as with all other submissions. Within a submission a respondent may provide up to four responses (one for each proposed amendment) and thus it is possible for there to be more responses than there are submissions.

Submissions received via email or on the YourSAy discussion board were assessed for their stance on the proposed amendments and scored as either in support or opposition to the amendments. Respondents were categorised as either; local residents, recreational fishers, commercial fishers or individuals. In some cases, where not explicitly stated, some assumptions were made as to which category a respondent was assigned based on the content of their submission. Respondent names on YourSAy discussion posts were compared with email submission names and where duplicate submissions were noted, only the email submission was counted.

ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

The community consultation for the marine park amendment process ended on the 31st of December 2021 received 78 submissions comprising of 27 YourSAy discussion board submissions (total discussion board comments n=77) and 51 email submissions.

Overall views supporting or opposing the four 2021 proposed amendments are summarised below in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of responses per amendment

Proposed Amendment / Sanctuary Zone	Support	Oppose	Total
1. Nuyts Archipelago Marine Park - <i>Isles of St Francis SZ</i>	4	12	16
2. Neptune Islands Group (Ron and Valerie Taylor) Marine Park - <i>North Neptune Islands SZ</i>	9	4	13
3. Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park - <i>Clinton Wetlands SZ</i>	9	4	13
4. Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park / D'Estrees Bay SZ	5	63	68
Total	27	83	110

Peak stakeholder positions with respect to the four 2021 proposed amendments are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of submissions from peak bodies

Peak Body	1. Isles of St Francis	2. North Neptune Islands	3. Clinton Wetlands	4. D'Estrees Bay
Ministers Recreational Fishing Advisory Council	oppose	oppose	support	oppose
RecFishSA	oppose	support	support	oppose
The Conservation Council of SA*	support	support	support	support
Northern Zone Rock Lobster*	support	support	support	support
The Wilderness Society (SA)*	support	support	support	support
SA Abalone Industry and Wildcatch Fisheries SA*	support	support	support	support
PEW Charitable Trusts*	support	support	support	support

* Joint submission

Feedback from the consultation on the 2021 Proposed Amendments for each of the Marine Parks are summarised below:

1. Nuyts Archipelago Marine Park – A 2021 Proposed Amendment to maintain the original boundaries of the Isles of St Francis Sanctuary Zone with a Special Purpose Area overlaid in the north east region to allow for commercial abalone fishing only.

25% of responses were in favour of the proposed amendment while 75% indicated opposition (no. responses = 16).

Those in favour of the amendments stated;

- benefits for local communities and sustainable seafood
- general non specific support.

Those opposed to the amendments stated;

- opposition to allowing commercial abalone fishing
- general opposition
- negative impacts to ecotourism and the sentiment that this area should only be for low impact eco-tourism
- lack of evidence/threats/fishing pressure to warrant a sanctuary zone in the area
- a desire to reinstate the 2012 boundaries.

There were four alternative suggestions;

- to also allow recreational fishing in the area so there is equitable use between commercial and recreational sectors
- to retain sanctuary zone and do not allow fishing
- to make the SZ larger
- to move the SZ to a more suitable location.



2. Neptune Islands Group (Ron and Valerie Taylor) Marine Park - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to revise the North Neptune Islands Sanctuary Zone with a north east extension to the outer boundaries of the marine park.

69% of responses were in favour of the proposed amendment while 31% indicated opposition (no. of responses=13).

Those in favour of the amendments stated;

- benefits for local communities and sustainable seafood
- general non specific support.

Those opposed to the amendments stated;

- general opposition
- lack of evidence/threats or fishing pressure
- a desire to reinstate the 2012 boundaries.

There was one alternative suggestion;

- to increase the size of the sanctuary zone so that it achieves 25% of the Neptune Islands Group Marine Park overall.

3. Upper Gulf St Vincent Marine Park - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to maintain the original boundaries of Clinton Wetlands Sanctuary Zone with the inclusion of a Special Purpose Area about 2km SW of Port Arthur to allow shore-based recreational line fishing.

69% of responses were in favour of the proposed amendment while 31% indicated opposition (no. of responses =13).

Those in favour of the amendments stated;

- benefits for local communities and sustainable seafood
- general nonspecific support.

Those opposed to the amendments stated;

- general opposition
- lack of evidence/threats/fishing pressure to warrant a sanctuary zone in the area
- a desire to reinstate the 2012 boundaries.

There were three alternative suggestions;

- to also allow shore entry recreational spear fishing in the area
- to increase the area allowed for recreational shore based fishing by either joining the two special purpose areas or allowing shore based fishing throughout the entire SZ
- to allow more recreational fishing in the area but not commercial fishing.

4. Southern Kangaroo Island Marine Park - A 2021 Proposed Amendment to add a new sanctuary zone at D'Estrees Bay with a Special Purpose Area that allows for shore based recreational line fishing.

7% of responses were in favour of the proposed amendment while 93% showed opposition (no. of responses=63).

Those in favour of the amendments stated;

- benefits for local communities and sustainable seafood
- support for allowing shore based fishing
- general non specific support.

Those opposed to the amendments stated;

- lack of evidence/threats or fishing pressure for the changes
- request to leave as original 2012 boundaries
- concerns around boating safety if small craft are forced to travel further
- anger at the perceived tradeoff of zones in favour of commercial fishermen at Cape du Couedic
- concerns around the impact to community life, morale, tourism, shack ownership etc
- general non specific opposition.

There were three alternative suggestions;

- to consult locals and potentially come up with a more suitable location
- to allow more recreational fishing access
- allow shore entry spear fishing if the zone is to go ahead.

A summary of the common themes for each proposal as well as alternative suggestions are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Common feedback themes associated with each of the 2021 proposed amendments.

Sanctuary zone	Positive feedback	Negative feedback	Alternative suggestion
Isles of St Francis	<p>Support for changes that support the marine environment and sustainable seafood production</p> <p>General support for proposed amendments.</p>	<p>General opposition to proposal</p> <p>General opposition to any extension to marine parks sanctuary zones on the basis that recreational fishers aren't a sufficient threat to warrant their exclusion and were under-represented in the consultation process</p> <p>Retain SZ with no fishing as per 2012</p> <p>Retain highest protection and maintain area as a pristine low impact eco-tourism destination</p> <p>Lack of consultation with recreational fishing sector</p> <p>Allowing commercial fishing in a sanctuary zone sets bad precedent.</p>	<p>Allow equal access between recreational and commercial fishers</p> <p>Find an area elsewhere that requires more protection</p> <p>Retain sanctuary zone and do not allow fishing</p> <p>Increase the size of the SZ.</p>
North Neptune Islands	<p>Support for changes that support the marine environment and sustainable seafood production</p> <p>Non specific agreement to proposal</p> <p>Safer for recreational anglers who won't have to travel as far.</p>	<p>Non specific disagreement to proposal</p> <p>General opposition to any extension to marine parks sanctuary zones on the basis that recreational fishers aren't a sufficient threat to warrant their exclusion and were under-represented in the consultation process</p> <p>Retain highest protection and maintain area as a pristine low impact tourism destination</p> <p>Lack of consultation with recreational fishing sector.</p>	<p>Increase the size of the SZ so that it achieves 25% of the Neptune Islands Group Marine Park overall.</p>
Clinton Wetlands	<p>Non specific support for proposed amendments</p> <p>General support for increasing protections</p> <p>General support but would prefer some alternative arrangements</p> <p>Support for protecting nursery areas</p>	<p>General opposition to any extension to marine parks sanctuary zones on the basis that recreational fishers aren't a sufficient threat to warrant their exclusion and were under-represented in the consultation process.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with recreational fishing sector.</p>	<p>Combine proposed SPA with existing SPA (more access and easier to be compliant)</p> <p>Allow Shorebased fishing throughout</p> <p>Ban commercial net fishing in Upper Gulf St Vincent</p>

Sanctuary zone	Positive feedback	Negative feedback	Alternative suggestion
	Support for exclusion of commercial fishers from upper Gulf St Vincent.		Ban commercial net fishing from a line north of Edithburgh to West Beach, to the top of Gulf St Vincent Allow shore based spear fishing.
D'Estrees Bay	Non specific support for proposed amendments Support for new zones to help attain 30% of coastal waters protected.	General opposition to any extension to marine parks sanctuary zones on the basis that recreational fishers aren't a sufficient threat to warrant their exclusion and were under-represented in the consultation process SZ will "lock out" locals No suitable boat ramps nearby if these are included in the SZ SZ will create safety hazard forcing small boats into dangerous water Lack of rock lobster fishing historically in the area so not a fair trade off for the reduction in size of the Cape du Couedic SZ. Trade off for Cape du Couedic is not 'like for like' Impacts to tourism and local home/shack value Lack of scientific evidence to support creation of SZ or show its benefits Negative economic impact Negative impact on local community Taking away safe family activities Lack of public consultation with locals	Conduct more thorough public consultation with KI locals to come up with an alternative SZ site Allow spear fishing in addition to shore based fishing Put SZ in front of new camp ground Change SZ to Shag Rock area Move SZ away from boat ramps Allow recreational fishing to one nautical mile Let locals fish the area Start the sanctuary around past Sewers where no one goes A more appropriate spot for a SZ would be over by Osmanli Reef Put SZ's in areas with greater need for protection such as metropolitan areas.

Sanctuary zone	Positive feedback	Negative feedback	Alternative suggestion
		<p>Lack of consultation with recreational fishing sector</p> <p>Was decided in 2012 marine park process to not include this sanctuary zone and therefore shouldn't be considered in 2021.</p>	



NEXT STEPS

DEW has reviewed all submissions received to prepare this consultation report.

This report, together with copies of all submissions and the advice of the Parks and Wilderness Council, will be considered by the Minister for Environment and Water in determining whether to adopt the management plan amendments. Following the Minister's decision, adopted plans will be considered for Authorisation by Her Excellency the Governor and her decision published in the Government Gazette.