

News Release

Premier Jay Weatherill

Minister for State Development

Minister Paul Caica

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation



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South Australian Marine Parks take effect today

South Australia's network of 19 Marine Parks officially takes effect today – protecting our unique marine environment for the future.

Premier Jay Weatherill said Marine Parks zones take effect immediately, but effects on fishing would be phased in and supported with a public education campaign.

“South Australians cherish our marine environment because of its recreation, fishing, food and economic opportunities,” Mr Weatherill said.

“Our oceans have more diversity than the Great Barrier Reef - and many of the marine plants and animals living in southern Australian waters can't be found anywhere else on earth.

“That is worth protecting.

“Today marks the end of a long public consultation process to establish the marine parks, which will help to conserve our irreplaceable marine environment while still allowing people to enjoy their favourite recreational activities.”

Mr Weatherill released the Marine Parks management plans and zoning and announced that the Neptune Islands Group Marine Park on the West Coast would be named after the pioneering Australian conservationists and film makers Ron and Valerie Taylor.

He said it was fitting to name the Neptune Islands Group Marine Park after the Taylors as they were internationally recognised as film makers for promoting the conservation of sharks, sea lions and other marine species.

“The Taylors have had a long association with South Australia and their films have been used around the world to educate people about the beauty and importance of our remarkable marine environment,” Mr Weatherill said.

“Ron Taylor sadly passed away earlier this year and Valerie now carries on their legacy to advocate for marine protection.”

Sustainability, Environment and Conservation Minister Paul Caica said that with unprecedented community input, the marine parks had been carefully designed and zoned to protect fragile marine habitats while minimising the impact on industry.

“Sanctuary zones make up about six per cent of state waters - areas where activities such as commercial and recreational fishing, trawling and mining are not allowed - to protect animal and fish breeding and feeding areas and unspoiled habitats,” Mr Caica said.

"These zones allow for preservation, while elsewhere commercial fishers can continue to benefit from harvesting clean, green, premium South Australian seafood.

Mr Caica said the finalisation of the State's marine parks was a tribute to the hard work and determination of tens of thousands of South Australians who contributed to consultation on the parks.

"Each park is an investment in the long-term future of our environment and the prosperity of our state," Mr Caica said.

"By acting now to establish marine parks with sanctuary zones we can ease the pressure on the marine environment and ensure our children and grandchildren can enjoy it too."

The Marine Parks zoning takes effect today, but changes to fishing will be phased in with a community education campaign.

Fisheries Minister Gail Gago said the changes to recreational and commercial fishing would be phased in with trawling restrictions coming into effect in March 2013 and all other fishing restrictions in October 2014.

"The Government will be running an education campaign to let the public know about the zoning and where they can fish and enjoy our marine environment," Ms Gago said.

"Most people will be able to fish where they always have.

"Our commercial fishing industry makes an important contribution to our state's economy and marine parks have been carefully designed to avoid productive fishing areas where possible.

"The state-wide impact on commercial fishing is about 1.7 per cent and the Government will commence the buy-back of commercial fishing entitlements next year to offset this impact.

"Marine parks, together with fisheries management, are an important investment for our future."

For more information visit: www.marineparks.sa.gov.au