

# Neptune Islands Group Marine Park

## Preliminary sanctuary zone scenario

### Starting point for Marine Park Local Advisory Group discussion

South Australians enjoy the benefits of a healthy marine environment. However, the marine environment is under increasing pressure from a range of sources, including climate change, run-off and competition for resources, which could affect how we use and enjoy it in the future.

Marine parks are currently being set up around Australia as part of a national and international response to these increasing pressures.

In 2009, the South Australian Government declared a network of 19 marine parks to help protect and conserve areas of natural value within our State's waters for generations to come.

Your assistance is now needed to help develop the zoning and management plans for these marine parks.

At this meeting, you will begin the process of developing a proposed zoning scenario for your local marine park(s). You will be provided a range of information about zoning, including a preliminary sanctuary zone scenario developed by DENR, and other government agencies to provide a starting point for discussions by your MPLAG about how marine parks might be zoned for conservation, commerce and community use.

The preliminary sanctuary zone scenario is only a starting point and does not represent a Government proposal or preference. There may be better ways to design a marine park zoning scheme to achieve the desired outcomes. Your MPLAG's advice on its preferred zoning scenario(s) is sought.

The preliminary sanctuary zone scenarios have been developed using the environmental, social and economic information currently available to Government, including the information provided through SAMPIT (the South Australian Marine Parks Information Tool).

The next step is for the scenarios to be worked on over the next six months by the MPLAGs and key stakeholders, such as the seafood industry, tourism operators, local government and conservation interests, who all have important information to bring to the table.

It is expected that this work will result in changes to what is initially provided. Indeed, this is the purpose of MPLAGs and key stakeholder engagement - to better inform and assist the Government in this process - so we can help ensure that the needs of local communities and industries are met.

The State Government has not adopted an arbitrary percentage target for the size of sanctuary zones. Instead, it remains open to the advice of the community as to how to best design the marine parks network to protect and conserve marine biodiversity and marine habitats in a manner that accords with the objects of the *Marine Parks Act 2007*.

To assist MPLAGs, key stakeholders and other community members to develop their preferred zoning scenario(s), you will be provided with some indicative zoning guidelines.

These guidelines have been developed with due regard to advice from the Marine Parks Scientific Working Group and Marine Parks Council of South Australia, which provide independent advice on marine park matters.

One of these zoning guidelines is that sanctuary zones should cover about 20-25% of each marine park - this would translate to about 10% of our State's waters.

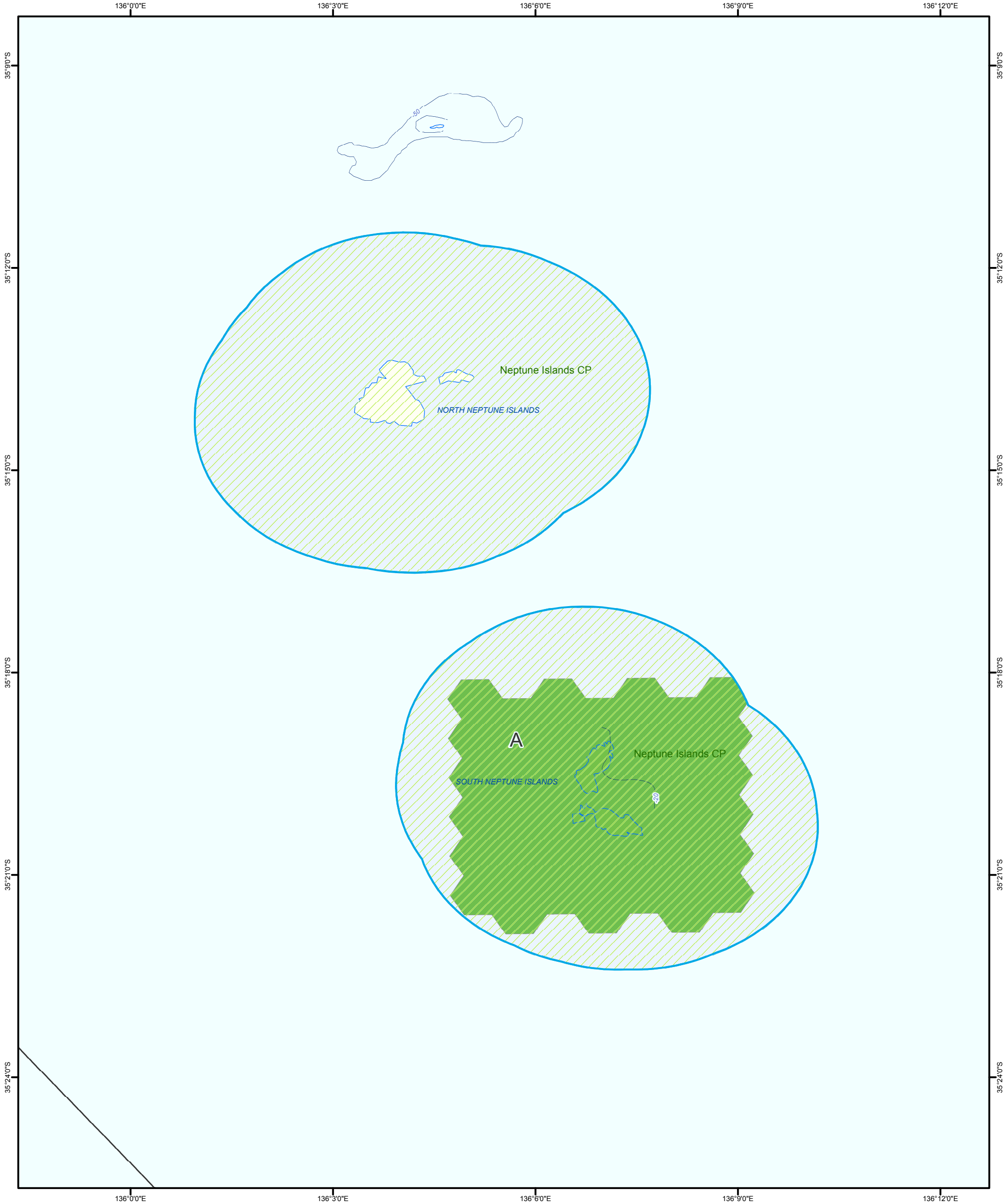
However, this is a guideline only and may not be achievable in some marine parks, particularly where there are significant policy commitments in place to provide for various current and future activities.

Your attention is drawn to the marine park policy commitments made by the Government in 2009, in particular the assurance given to the commercial fishing industry that the outcome of marine parks zoning will have no more than a 5% economic impact (as per the 2007 EconSearch report).

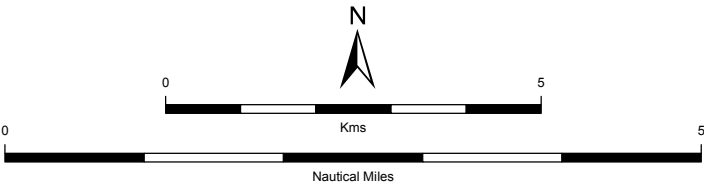
In developing your preferred zoning scenarios it will be important that you apply the full zoning checklists and policy commitments, to help ensure your suggestions meet the marine park design requirements. Doing this will help you develop a proposal for your park(s) that is good for conservation and good for commercial and community interests.

**For more information**, please contact your MPLAG Executive Officer via email at [DENRmarine@sa.gov.au](mailto:DENRmarine@sa.gov.au), or phone the Coast and Marine Conservation Branch, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, on Freecall 1800 006 120.

Marine Park 7 - Neptune Islands Group Marine Park  
Preliminary Sanctuary Zone Scenario Starting Point - Version 1



- Possible Sanctuary Zones
- Marine Park
- Parks and Reserves
- Bathymetry
- Coastline (median high water)
- Coastal Waters of the State



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Basis for 'Starting Point' Preliminary Sanctuary Zone Scenario – Neptune Islands Group Marine Park (Park 7)		
Location of possible Sanctuary Zone	Area	Rationale for possible Sanctuary Zone
Zone A: South Neptune Islands	42 km <sup>2</sup>	<p><b>This possible Sanctuary Zone represents the following habitats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This possible Sanctuary Zone represents sections of granite rocky reef habitats, soft-bottom and deep water habitats and exposed cliffs.</li> <li>• As a precautionary measure areas of unmapped habitat are represented, however it is known that these include steep underwater slopes down to water up to 50m deep which create significant variation in habitats and the species they support</li> </ul> <p><b>Other important features and natural processes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Neptune Islands are the most important New Zealand fur seal pup production site in South Australia with approximately half of the Australian population of New Zealand fur seals located at this location and just less than half of these located within this possible Sanctuary Zone.</li> <li>• The area is also a breeding colony for the vulnerable Australian sea lion and vulnerable white shark, which feed and breed in the areas surrounding the islands.</li> <li>• Seabirds whose habitats are required to be protected under international treaties roost and nest on the islands.</li> <li>• The area also provides breeding habitat for the little penguin, rare rock parrot, rare sooty oystercatcher, rare Cape Barren goose, endangered white-bellied sea-eagle, endangered fairy tern and possibly the red-tailed tropic bird.</li> <li>• Adding to the diversity of habitats and species within this Zone is the area's exposure to the warm water Leeuwin Current and the cooler Flinders Current.</li> <li>• It is ecologically linked with other possible Sanctuary Zones including those in the Gambier Island Group Marine Park and Thorny Passage Marine Park.</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and economic considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This possible Sanctuary Zone includes most of the southern section of the Neptune Islands Conservation Park creating a protected corridor between land and sea.</li> <li>• The southern-most island features a lighthouse, buildings and a jetty which are listed on the <i>Register of the National Estate</i> and <i>State Heritage Register</i>.</li> <li>• The islands are also listed on the <i>Register of the National Estate</i> in recognition of their importance as seabird breeding sites as well as the colonies of New Zealand fur seals and the vulnerable Australian sea lion.</li> <li>• This Zone is located to provide for charter boat activity at the Northern Neptune Islands (mainly white shark cage diving).</li> </ul>

This table shows the environmental values represented in each possible Sanctuary Zone within Neptune Islands Group Marine Park

		Possible Sanctuary Zone		
Environmental Values	Units	A	Total in all Zones	Total in Marine Park
Ecologically Important Species				
Australian Sealions (breeding sites)	Count	1	1	1
Australian Sealions (haulout sites)	Count	1	1	2
Coastal Shorebird Sites	Count	14	14	17
New Zealand Fur Seals (breeding sites)	Count	3	3	4
Sea Bird Breeding and Nesting Sites	Count	5	5	8
Underwater Habitats				
Rocky Reef (0 to -10m)	Km²			<1
Rocky Reef (-10 to -30m)	Km²			<1
Rocky Reef (-30 to -50m)	Km²			<1
Rocky Reef (>-50m)	Km²			1
Unmapped (0 to -10m)	Km²	3	3	4
Unmapped (-10 to -30m)	Km²	3	3	4
Unmapped (-30 to -50m)	Km²	4	4	12
Unmapped (>-50m)	Km²	32	32	122
Shore Habitats				
Offshore Islands	Count	3	3	5

\* note that numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole number.