

TASMANIA'S OCEANS ARE SPECIAL

Tasmania is blessed. It has some of the best remaining wild temperate reef left in the world but over the last 100 years Tasmanian coastal marine life has been declining (Frijlink & Lyle 2013) and is facing further threats from climate change and pollution.

Healthy Tasmanian marine ecosystems mean jobs, healthy fishing, recreation, education, science, tourism and marine food webs. We need to do more to keep them healthy for future generations.

‘A single marine reserve can provide insurance against population declines for hundreds of species and improved fisheries outcomes as long as it is well designed and regulated (Edgar et al. 2014, Ward 2004)

HOW DOES IT AFFECT MY FISHING?

Fishing is fun. Marine parks supporters aren't attacking fishing rather they are trying to keep small parts of the coastal marine environment healthy for our grandchildren.

Marine parks can be good for fishing. The boundaries are often hotspots for fishing, in depleted areas they may be the only good spot to fish. They work especially well for fish species with small home ranges such as sand flathead. A well protected area can boost fish recruitment and growth in the surrounding areas.

Marine parks can have different zones with different rules. Some can allow for activities like recreational fishing, but they often should include “sanctuary zones” where some human activities are restricted.

HOW ARE SITES PICKED?

Sites are picked with extensive stakeholder involvement and follow the guidelines set out by Australia's National Reserve System of Marine Protected Areas. This ensures that marine parks are:

Comprehensive—big enough to include the full range of ecosystems/habitats found in each bioregion.

Adequate—the rules are strong enough to protect the values.

Representative—protect a good sample of all the diversity that is found in that bioregion

We still need to use the oceans for food, industry and recreation, so we aren't talking about locking up vast areas. In Tasmania, we are talking about protecting relatively small but very special areas as refuges for the marine life. Only about 1.1% of Tasmania's state waters (to 3M and excluding Macquarie Is) are currently in sanctuary zones and that isn't enough to protect special sites from the combined pressures of fishing, climate change and pollution.



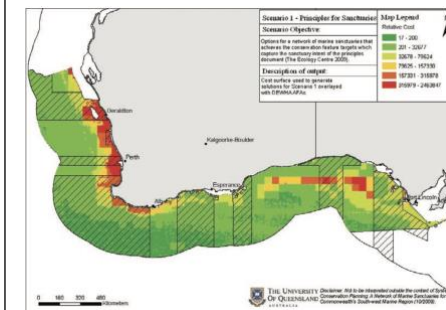
Tasmania has 9 Marine Bioregions representing different types of habitats and ecosystems. Image from EPA Tasmania

WHICH AREAS MAKE GOOD MPAs?

Lots of things are taken into account including rare or unique plants and animals, breeding places, special geology, areas with high species diversity and areas with a range of habitats. Recreation and tourism opportunities should also be considered.

We should provide for at least two marine parks in each bioregion that can protect the special life and habitats found in those areas. The international target set by the Convention of Biodiversity (ratified by 196 nations) is 10% of coastal marine waters.

Sites should try to minimise clashes with people who already use areas and this can be done with thorough and inclusive consultation. This social data can be combined with economic and environmental data in computer software that calculates a range of options that minimises overlap between marine parks and high use areas. This is how Western Australia and South Australia avoided user conflict (see high use red zones and green low use zones in picture below) in establishing their network of marine parks.



Tasmania has had a moratorium on marine parks since 2007 despite most people caring a lot about the marine environment. Tasmanians for Marine Parks are calling for a discussion around the best process for improving our marine protection.

ABOUT MARINE PARKS

What is a Marine Park?

When we talk about “marine parks” in Tasmania we are talking about protecting areas that have special natural values such as kelp forests, sponge gardens, seamounts, breeding sites and have a range of habitats and depths and may be linked to important wetland habitats.

Why Marine Parks are a Good Idea

Scientists have listed some of the benefits of marine parks as:

1. Conserving rare and representative plants and animals and the habitats they depend on.
2. Saving small sections of our coastline in their natural state to allow the marine life to live and breed free from human impacts. This encourages a healthy food web which has positive flow on effects in the surrounding waters.
3. Protect and promote unique spots for education, recreation and tourism.
4. Marine reserves act as a reference or baseline in scientific studies to assess the impact of other activities like fishing.
5. Marine reserves can act as a "seed" source, replenishing nearby areas.



WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

How Can I Help?

You are welcome to become a member of Tasmanians for Marine Parks (\$25/y) or just contact us. You will be provided with an information package that includes educational material, a poster and a list of opportunities in the organisation depending on how much time/energy you have to spare. Please contact us if you have an idea to help promote marine parks in Tasmania.

Who Can I Contact?

Webpage: www.marinelife.org.au

Email: moremarineparks@gmail.com

Follow: Tasmanians for Marine Parks on Facebook and Instagram



References

Edgar, G. J., Ward, T. J., Stuart-Smith R. D. (2017) *Rapid declines across Australian fishery stocks indicate global sustainability targets will not be met without an expanded network of 'no-fishing' zones*. Aquatic Conservation Marine Freshwater Ecosystems 28:1337-1350

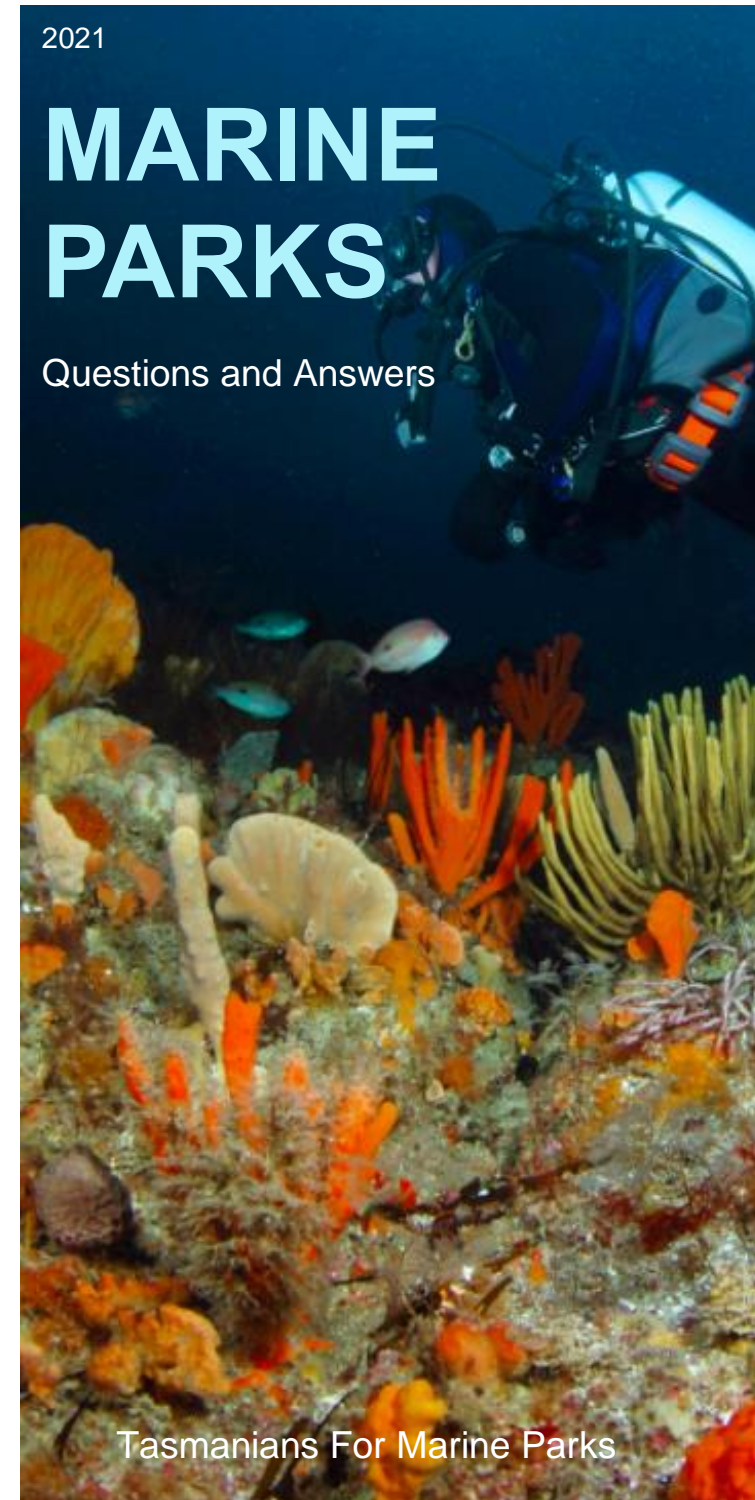
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MARINE PARKS

Questions and Answers



Tasmanians For Marine Parks