

## South-east Marine Parks Advisory Committee

### Meeting #1 Communique

16 May 2019, Hobart

#### About the Committee

The inaugural meeting of the South-east Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committee (SEMPAC) was held in Hobart on Thursday 16 May 2019.

The SEMPAC meetings are a successor to the previous SE Forum. This meeting marked the beginning of a two year term for the 10 newly appointed members. Individual members were selected from a large number of applicants who responded to a public expression of interest process open to all Australians last year.

Members of the Committee were selected based on their individual expertise, experience and capabilities across a diverse range of areas, including tourism, fishing, sea country values, science, conservation, governance and communication.

Appointment of the SEMPAC represents an important step in implementing actions in the South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan that came into effect on 1 July 2013. The role of the Committee is advisory, not regulatory, and will guide Parks Australia and the Director of National Parks on key aspects of marine park management.

#### Welcoming the new members

Craig Everett from NITA Education provided a welcome to country to commence the inaugural South-east Marine Park Advisory Committee

#### Member attendance

Hilary Schofield (Chair)  
Emma Woodcock  
Hank Horton  
John Sansom  
Mark Nikolai  
Marg O'Toole  
Michael Burgess  
Neville Barrett  
Shannon Hurley  
Tony Koslow

#### Observers

Parks Victoria  
Tasmania Police  
Tasmanian Dept. of Primary, Industries,  
Parks, Water and the Environment

meeting. There were a series of presentations introducing the Australian Marine Parks, the South-east Network and the approach to management.

More information can be found in the South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan available on Parks Australia's website.

These presentations set the scene for a discussion with the Committee Members about the implementation of the South-east Marine Parks Network Management Plan.

The management plan outlines seven management strategies and supporting actions which aim to protect important marine habitats, features and species, while supporting use and enjoyment of these special places.

## **Implementation Plan – Consolidation**

The focus of the first meeting was the Consolidation Phase Implementation Plan, which identifies management actions in the second 4 years of management (2018-2022).

Under each of the seven programs advice from Committee members was sought on:

- Subject or location specific management needs and opportunities;
- Relevant work and programs recently completed, underway or planned that can inform park management; and
- Marine park user/stakeholder information needs and engagement opportunities.

### **Communication, Education and Awareness Program**

Suggestions focused around actions to improve awareness, understanding and support for marine parks and park management. Topics included improvements to online platforms, the development of marine park digital communication tools, attendance at regional events, and the role of partner organisations as conduits for spreading marine park awareness.

### **Tourism and Visitor Experience Program**

The scale of current tourism within the South-east Network was discussed.

### **Indigenous Engagement Program**

Opportunities to recognise and respect the ongoing cultural connection and responsibilities of Aboriginal people to care for sea country were discussed. This included the development of educational programs for the school curriculum.

### **Marine Science Program**

Actions to improve knowledge and understanding of marine park values and pressures were discussed, including current and future monitoring programs.

## **Assessments and Authorisations Program**

Parks Australia's process for authorising activities in marine parks was discussed. This included permit applications and assessments for tour operators, industry and researchers. Information about Parks Australia's authorisations – permits, class approvals, and activity licences and leases is available at:

[onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/australian-marine-parks](https://onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/australian-marine-parks)

### **Parks Protection and Management Program**

This program covers incident response, infrastructure needs, on-ground management interventions and supporting documents, such as the South-east Network's Critical Incident Response Action Plan.

### **Compliance Program**

The Committee was provided with an update on Parks Australia's compliance program, including a presentation on the aerial and surface patrols within the South-east Network. Discussions focused around actions to support voluntary compliance by marine parks users.

## **Next Meeting**

Proposed to be held in Melbourne in late October or November 2019. For further information about the South-east Marine Parks Network or the Committee:

Visit [parksaustralia.gov.au/south-east](https://parksaustralia.gov.au/south-east)

Email [marineparks@environment.gov.au](mailto:marineparks@environment.gov.au)