

South-east Marine Parks Advisory Committee

Meeting #13 Communique

10 November 2025

Committee Meeting Overview

The 13th meeting of the South-east Marine Parks Advisory Committee was held via Microsoft Teams video conference on Monday 10 November 2025.

The Chair provided an Acknowledgment of Country, paying respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which the meeting was held.

Agenda items included:

- National context and welcome from the AMP Executive
- South-east fisheries grant program
- South-east Network science projects
- South-east First Nations Connections and Partnership Program
- OMPG 4 - CSIRO SEA-MES project
- South-east Management Report.

National context and welcome from the AMP Executive

The Chair welcomed Shaun Barclay to provide an update on Australian Marine Park management.

The committee was informed that the South-east Network & Indian Ocean management plans passed the disallowance period and are now in implementation phase. The other Marine Park Networks are preparing for the review phase of their management plans.

Further updates include Parks Australia will temporarily manage the Ghost Nets initiative until late 2025 and Minister Watt has committed to increasing highly protected zoning from 24% to 30% by 2030.

Member attendance

Russell Gueho (Chair)
Neville Barrett
Tony Koslow
Marg O'Toole
Melanie Mackenzie
Mark Rodrigue
John Whittington

Observers

Department of Natural Resources and the Environment – Fisheries and Enforcement
Parks Victoria
Tasmania Police

South-east Network science projects

The Chair welcomed Neville Barrett to provide an update on research activities within the South-east Network.

The committee noted the following updates:

- First video evidence of urchins in Beagle MP raises concerns for deep-water ecosystems.
- A second aggregation of Port Jackson sharks was detected in Beagle MP attracting global attention.
- BRUV imagery shows gummy sharks dominate biomass in Beagle MP.
- AI was used to detect handfish in imagery from Freycinet and Tasman Fracture MP surveys.
- ROV and eDNA sampling underway for handfish in Huon and Tasman Fracture MPs.
- AUV imagery mosaics for Tasman Fracture and Huon MPs available on Seamap Australia.
- Acoustic receivers in marine parks measure biological and human-made

noise, with detections confirming blue whales from multiple populations near Tasman Fracture Marine Park.

SEMPAC members expressed support for endorsing the IMOS AUV Facility and AI research in SE AMPs.

South-east fisheries grants program

The Chair welcomed Allyn White to provide an update on the South-east fisheries assistance grants program.

The 2025 South-east Fisheries Assistance Program will support fishers affected by zoning changes with a one-off assistance payment. Eligibility was determined by catch data provided by fisheries management agencies and analysed by ABARES. No Victorian fishers were impacted.

Parks Australia will provide information packs to each eligible fishing business.

South-east First Nations Connections and Partnership program

The Chair welcomed Tammy Hunter, the East Indigenous Engagement Officer. This new role ensures First Nations voices in Sea Country management. Tammy provided an update on the First Nations Connections and Partnership program.

During the review of the SE Management plan, a commitment was made to develop a South-east Sea Country strategy that identifies management priorities backed by the SE First Nations Groups. Outback Academy has been contracted to engage with First Nations groups across the network and will ensure culturally safe participation, aiming to strengthen regional engagement and structural inclusion.

A Sea Country Strategy workshop is planned for February 2026.

OMPG 4 - CSIRO SEA-MES project

The Chair welcomed Rich Little to provide an update on the CSIRO's Southeast Australian Marine Ecosystem Survey (SEA-MES).

Four 35-day SEA-MES voyages assessed ecosystem changes since the 1990s, aiming to understand marine park values, pressures

and impact, strengthen First Nations Sea Country management and create opportunities for students and early-career scientists.

New sampling methods, such as eDNA and AI, were paired with traditional methods of measuring ecosystems, with preliminary results indicating changes in oceanographic conditions, specifically increases in long term averages in sea surface temperatures.

The CSIRO's collaboration with First Nations and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Council was outlined, including CSIRO supporting First Nations stakeholders to develop names for 'Petroglyph' features that were detected during Voyage 3.

South-east management report

The SE Network Management Report was tabled which provided an overview of management activities since February 2024.

The Committee noted the following updates:

- Parks Australia held an information booth at both the Ocean Lovers Festival (Bondi) and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (Hobart) during Science Week.
- Plans are underway to update SE MP boat ramp signage.
- Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre is tracking *yula* in South-east MP's.
- The Explore Sea Country Program has been renewed for another two years.
- *Here on Sea Country* book distributed to all Tasmanian primary schools.
- Southern Otway Landcare Group installed eight new interpretative signs about Apollo MP.
- The basketwork eel aggregation project in Huon MP has been completed.

Next Meeting

The next committee meeting will be a face-to-face meeting in March/April 2026.

For more information about the South-east Marine Parks Network or the Committee:

Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/South-east

Email marineparks@dcceew.gov.au