



Fact sheet

Information for commercial tourism operators

South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan 2013-23

Commercial tourism activities include charter fishing, scuba diving, snorkelling and nature watching activities, such as whale and dolphin watching and aircraft-based activities.

All commercial tourism operators who currently operate or intend to operate in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network need to be aware of the management arrangements in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan 2013-23 (the Management Plan). The Management Plan is scheduled to come into effect on 1 July 2013 and will be in place for 10 years. The Management Plan replaces the interim management arrangements and approvals that have been in place since the Network was established in 2007.

Permitting arrangements for commercial tourism activities

The Management Plan continues to allow commercial tourism in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network consistent with the interim management arrangements. However, the way that commercial tourism operators are authorised will change slightly.

Under the Management Plan, commercial tourism operators will need to have a permit from the Director of National Parks. While new operators will need to apply for a permit, all operators who currently hold an approval under the interim management

arrangements will be issued with a permit within 12 months of the Management Plan coming into effect and will not need to apply. Until a permit is issued existing approval holders can continue their operations in accordance with the conditions of that approval.

Further information on obtaining a permit for new commercial tourism activities will be available on the department's website.

Summary of allowed commercial tourism operations

The Management Plan allows for a range of commercial tourism activities within the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network, consistent with the interim management arrangements that have been in place since 2007.

The areas in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network where commercial tourism activities can be undertaken have been determined on the basis of the type of zoning of the reserves, whether the activity is associated with fishing, and whether the activity is undertaken on or in the water.

Charter fishing

Under the Management Plan, commercial tourism operations associated with fishing activities are not allowed in the Sanctuary zone or the Marine

National Park zones. However, charter fishing may operate in all other zones with a permit and consistent with relevant state fisheries laws.

Clients of charter fishing operators are viewed as recreational fishers. As recreational fishers, clients must comply with state recreational fishing laws regarding licences and permits, and size and bag limits. Note that charter fishing clients require no additional Commonwealth approval to fish in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network.

It is a condition of all permits that cleaning and filleting of fish is not allowed in the Sanctuary zone or Marine National Park zones of the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network.

Other tourism activities

Under the Management Plan, scuba diving, nature watching and snorkelling tourism activities are allowed with a permit in all zones in the Network except the Sanctuary zone.

The Management Plan can control the airspace up to 3000 metres above sea level over the Network. However, commercial aviation tours may operate in this airspace without a permit. Landing of aircraft in the Network does require a permit.

The requirements when interacting with cetaceans and whale watching are set out in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Regulations. The Australian National Guidelines for Whale and Dolphin Watching are available on the department's website.

Transiting within marine reserves

The Management Plan allows commercial tour vessels to transit through all marine reserve zones in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves

Network, including the Sanctuary zone or Marine National Park zones, provided that all fishing gear is stowed and secured. Note that for charter and recreational fishing 'stowed and secured' means that all fishing equipment, including nets and lines, are not in contact with the water, are onboard the vessel, and lines are unrigged.

Some changes to zone names

The Management Plan changes the names and International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categories of zones in some of the reserves in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network. These changes establish a consistent approach to zone names, categories and identifying colours for all Commonwealth marine reserves around Australia.

Importantly, none of these name and category changes alter the uses or activities that have previously been allowed in these zones.

The zone name changes are as follows:

- The Flinders, Freycinet, Murray and Tasman Fracture Commonwealth Marine Reserves Sanctuary zones (IUCN Category Ia) have changed to Marine National Park zones (IUCN Category II).
- The Huon Commonwealth Marine Reserve Benthic Sanctuary Zone (IUCN Category Ia) has changed to a Habitat Protection zone (IUCN Category IV).
- The Freycinet Commonwealth Marine Reserve Recreational Use zone (IUCN Category II) has changed to a Recreational Use zone (IUCN Category IV).

The colours used to represent some zones have also changed as follows:

- The Macquarie Island Commonwealth Marine Reserve Sanctuary Zone has changed from green to pink.
- The Huon Commonwealth Marine Reserve Benthic Sanctuary Zone has changed from pale green to yellow.

Summary of management arrangements for commercial tourism operations in the South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network

Activity	Sanctuary Zone (IUCN Ia)	Marine National Park Zone (IUCN II)	Habitat Protection Zone (IUCN IV)	Recreational Use Zone (IUCN IV)	Special Purpose Zone (IUCN VI)	Multiple Use Zone (IUCN VI)
Commercial tourism—fishing, including charter fishing tours	✗	✗	P	P	P	P
Commercial tourism—non-fishing, including nature watching, scuba and snorkel tours	✗	P	P	P	P	P
Commercial aviation tours	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commercial media— including in-water filming and photography	P	P	P	P	P	P
Vessel transiting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

- ✓ Activity is allowed in accordance with plan prescriptions (without the need for a permit or class approval).
 ✗ Activity is not allowed at all (i.e. totally prohibited).
 P Activity is allowable in accordance with a permit from the Director of National Parks.

Further information

The South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan and a range of supporting maps are available on our website:
www.environment.gov.au/marinereserves

If you have any enquiries regarding the Management Plan or commercial tourism arrangements please contact:

Manager
South-east Commonwealth Marine Reserves
Network
Parks Australia
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone: 1800 069 352
Email: marinereserves@environment.gov.au