



# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## What are MPAs?

Just like national parks on land, marine protected areas help safeguard areas of the ocean and marine animals.

**41** MPAs are found in the ocean around the South African mainland and islands.

**87%**

of marine ecosystem types are represented in our MPA network

**5%** of the ocean around South Africa is protected

**57 736 km<sup>2</sup>** of the ocean around South Africa is protected

MPAs are an insurance policy for healthy oceans and ocean economies. They are an investment in our future well-being.



Photo: Jean Tresfon



Photo: Eve Marshall

MPAs protect marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity.

MPAs protect spawning and nursery areas for fish and undisturbed breeding grounds for other animals.



Photo: Steve Benjamin



Photo: Ryan Daly

No-take MPAs allow populations of fish and invertebrates to increase and restock adjacent fished areas.

[www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/iconic-species](http://www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/iconic-species)



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# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## Protecting our natural heritage

**150** different marine ecoregions found in South Africa's waters

Over **3800** marine species living in South African waters are found no-where else in the world.

South Africa has of the **10%** world's coral species

**261** endemic fish species in South African waters

**3** oceans around South Africa – Indian, Atlantic and Southern

**290** estuaries along the South African coast



Photo: Peter Timm

MPAs help protect rare and endangered species. The submarine canyons of iSimangaliso MPA protect Coelacanths.

Our MPAs help protect different habitats such as coral and rocky reefs, kelp forests, rocky and sandy shores, estuaries and underwater canyons.



Photo: Eve Marshall

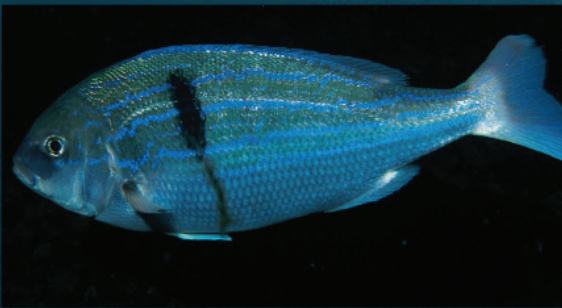


Photo: Dennis King

Seventy four, once a popular dining fish, was heavily overfished by the 1960's. Now it is protected and numbers are increasing, especially in MPAs.

16% of the world's shark, skate and ray species are found in SA waters, many of which are threatened. MPAs protect many species of sharks and rays

Photo: Morne Hardenberg



[www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/ecosystems](http://www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/ecosystems)



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# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## Protect an important food source

The fish and invertebrates in MPAs increase in size and abundance leading to spill-over into adjacent fished areas.

Less than **8%** of estuaries are protected in MPAs

**1.1** million km<sup>2</sup> is the total area of South Africa's Exclusive Economic Zone

**>2000** fish species found in South African waters

**700** marine species are harvested

No-take MPAs provide safe spaces in which fish can breed undisturbed. Young fish mature into adulthood, without the pressure of fishing.



Photo: Steve Benjamin



Photo: Judy Mann

MPAs protect spawning and nursery areas of many species of fish.

Resident older, larger female fish that are protected in MPAs produce more and healthier eggs than the smaller fish found in fished areas.



Photo: Dennis King



Photo: Judy Mann

In an increasingly industrialised ocean, MPAs help maintain food and job security provided by the fisheries sector.

[www.saambr.org.za/marine-protected-areas-mpas/](http://www.saambr.org.za/marine-protected-areas-mpas/)



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# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## MPAs are important for people

**22**  
commercial  
fisheries employ

**43** thousand  
people in  
South Africa

The oceans are a source of  
employment, food security,  
inspiration, education  
and relaxation.

**500**  
thousand  
people go fishing  
for fun on South  
Africa's coastline

Healthy shores support  
**23** thousand small  
scale fishers

**R400** million was the  
direct value  
of marine and coastal  
tourism in 2013



Photo: Judy Mann

MPAs help protect our cultural heritage.  
Many people turn to the ocean for  
cleansing, worship, inspiration and  
rejuvenation.



Photo: E KZN Wildlife

MPAs are amazing outdoor classrooms.  
Students of all ages can explore and  
enjoy nature in our MPAs.



Photo: Judy Mann

MPAs help to create sustainable jobs.

Coastal resorts are popular holiday  
destinations. The pristine condition of  
MPAs attract people wanting to get  
close to nature.

Photo: E KZN Wildlife



[www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/benefits](http://www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/benefits)



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# MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## Pressures and threats

The ocean is getting busier as pressures in the marine environment diversify and expand.

**37%** of South Africa's seabirds are threatened

**30%** of South Africa's endemic seabreams are threatened

**55** species of invasive alien plants and animals have been found in our ocean

**4/5** turtle species are threatened

**300** exploratory offshore oil and gas wells have been drilled

As the demand for a healthy fish diet increases so does pressure on fish stocks increase.



Photo: Jean Tresfon



Photo: Judy Mann

Climate change and plastic pollution are threatening many marine species.

The increase in coastal development threatens coastal ecosystems, and puts pressure on natural processes.



Photo: Judy Mann



The effects of shipping and marine mining pose serious threats to ocean ecosystems.

Photo: E KZN Wildlife

[www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/pressures](http://www.marineprotectedareas.org.za/pressures)



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