



Correcting the myths in relation to the Encounter Marine Park Draft Zoning Plan

MYTH: The Draft Zoning Plan is about closing people's favourite fishing areas.

The Draft Zoning Plan is about better protecting examples of all the plants, animals and marine habitats that make up the diversity of the Marine Park. In many areas, there are few options where Sanctuary Zones (or 'no-take' areas) can be located while still protecting examples of each type of habitat. While Sanctuary Zones have been located in ways that impact as little as possible on existing patterns of use, in some cases, overlap with fishing areas may occur. However if necessary, and to minimise impacts on users of the Marine Park, moving the boundaries of some proposed Sanctuary Zones can still be considered, provided there are sound reasons and the proposed changes do not compromise the overall principles behind the Draft Zoning Plan. This is why your written submissions are important.

MYTH: The Draft Zoning Plan is a 'done deal' and is unlikely to change.

The Draft Zoning Plan represents the culmination of work by the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH), in conjunction with other Government agencies, a range of key stakeholders and the Encounter MPA Consultative Committee. DEH is now seeking broader public input to guide preparation of the Final Zoning Plan. The document is a genuine "DRAFT" and will be improved following the consultation process.

MYTH: The Encounter MPA Consultative Committee developed the Draft Zoning Plan.

The Draft Zoning Plan outlines the current thinking of DEH in relation to management of the Encounter Marine Park, not that of the Encounter MPA Consultative Committee. The Consultative Committee provided valuable input and guidance to the development of the Draft Zoning Plan. However, each member of the Committee, and/or the Committee itself, may have particular views in relation to the Draft Zoning Plan, and is welcome to provide a written submission to DEH detailing their comments.

MYTH: Sanctuary Zones are 'no-go areas'.

Anyone can enter a Sanctuary Zone and boating, swimming, sailing and snorkelling can all occur in Sanctuary Zones. However, extractive activities like fishing or collecting are not allowed. Launching a boat, as well as anchoring or over-nighting can also occur in Sanctuary Zones, but in some high use or sensitive areas, use of a mooring may be required.

MYTH: Fishers will be 'forced' to enter dangerous waters.

Sanctuary Zones do not restrict access to the State's waters and should not adversely affect the safety of recreational fishers. It is expected that all mariners sail to the prevailing conditions and within the limits of their vessel, equipment, skills and experience. There are many safe inshore locations for boat-based recreational fishers under the Draft Zoning Plan. Popular inshore fishing spots such as Eastern Cove, Antechamber Bay, Lady Bay, Wright Island and Oliver's Reef are all open to boat-based fishers. Further inshore and sheltered areas for fishers with small vessels may be identified following consideration of written submissions.

MYTH: Fishers will be 'squeezed' into small areas.

As far as practicable, effort displacement will be avoided by locating the Sanctuary Zones in ways that impact as little as possible on existing patterns of use in the marine park. The area of Sanctuary and Restricted Access Zones proposed in the Draft Zoning Plan is around 13 per cent. This means that up to 87 per cent of the Encounter Marine Park is open to recreational fishers under the Draft Zoning Plan. This figure is not a target, or set in concrete, and may be different in the Final Zoning Plan once all submissions have been considered.

MYTH: People cannot travel through a Sanctuary Zone with fish or fishing gear onboard.

Travelling through a Sanctuary Zone with fish or fishing gear onboard will be allowed, provided no fishing activity is conducted in the Sanctuary Zone and all fishing gear is stowed or secured.

MYTH: People will need a permit to take photographs inside the Marine Park.

People will be able to take as many pictures and sound recordings as they like. The only stipulation under the Draft Zoning Plan is that people accessing the Encounter Marine Park to collect images or sounds for commercial benefit will need to gain a permit. This is the same system followed in national parks across Australia.

MYTH: The Encounter Marine Park will damage tourism and regional economies.

Based on experiences elsewhere in Australia and overseas, it is expected that the marine park status in the region will attract tourists who will come to see the natural wonders that are being given greater protection. The development of the Encounter Marine Park will also provide additional opportunities for nature-based tourism, for example whale watching and sightseeing tours and new avenues associated with the dive industry. The Encounter Marine Park will complement the current nature-based tourism generated by terrestrial national parks on Kangaroo Island, which is currently one of the island's largest economic contributors.

MYTH: It will be essential to have a Geographical Positional System (GPS) to locate zone boundaries.

The boundaries of zones within the Encounter Marine Park will be identified in the most user-friendly format possible. All zone boundaries in the Draft Zoning Plan have recorded GPS points. The majority of the zone boundaries generally follow straight lines (i.e. north/south, east/west). Marker buoys may be appropriate for use in some protected, inshore areas and signage will be used at major access points (e.g. boat ramps) and potentially along beach areas indicating zone boundaries. Where possible, zone boundaries will use distinct visible landmarks to aid users on the water and shore.

MYTH: A petition or form letter will carry more weight than a written submission.

DEH will record each petition or form letter as a single submission, regardless of the number of signatories. The merit of each written submission will depend upon the nature of information provided. A submission form is available from DEH to assist people interested in providing comment in a practical format.

Have your say!

All written submissions received by 7 June 2005 will be considered before the Zoning Plan is finalised. Comments are invited on the various zones, the activities and uses or any other related matter. Submission forms are available from DEH.

Need more information?

For more information, or to obtain a brochure and submission form, call (08) 8124 4900 or visit the DEH website: www.environment.sa.gov.au (then click on "latest news").

