

# Commenting Tips/Guidelines to Support Proposed Phakisa MPA Network

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This document aims to help provide some background on the current Phakisa MPA process as well as guidelines on how to submit comments on this process and some suggested

## Background

There are 22 MPAs that are currently out for comment for a period of 90 days. Each MPA has been identified on the basis of a systematic planning process and is proposed to provide protection to priority marine ecosystems, most of which are currently unprotected. During the 2014 Phakisa Ocean Labs, prior to the gazetting of the proposed MPAs and during the comment period, the Department and technical team partners have been engaging stakeholders as part of the stakeholder consultation process which is ongoing until the end of the comment period. The purpose of this consultation is to:

- Elicit stakeholder feedback on proposed MPA network and draft regulations
- Clarify background, consultation process, proposed objectives, proposed zonation and proposed regulations
- Identify stakeholder concerns and potential solutions
- Identify and rectify errors
- Enable improvement

## Preparation and Submission of Comments

- Gazette can be downloaded from DEA website by following the link below:
- [https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/gazetted\\_notices/nempaa57of2003\\_draftregulations\\_newproposedmarineprotectedarea1\\_gg39646.pdf](https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/gazetted_notices/nempaa57of2003_draftregulations_newproposedmarineprotectedarea1_gg39646.pdf)
- The proposed Childs Bank MPA is in a separate issue from the 17<sup>th</sup> of Feb
- Note that each proposed MPA has a declaration notice and draft regulations, however you can submit a single submission which refers to all of the MPAs in the gazette.
- Comments can address any aspect of the notice or draft regulations
- It is helpful to note whether each comment is specific to the whole network, an individual proposed MPA or zone or a specific regulation
- Comments can be disagreements but support is also important to help with decision making in contentious areas
- Comments must be submitted to the Deputy Director General of DEA
- **By email:** [MPARegs@environment.gov.za](mailto:MPARegs@environment.gov.za)
- Closing date – 17 May 2016

## Tips on Commenting

- Provide specific comments and clear proposed solutions / recommendations
- Relate comments to specific objectives where appropriate eg. ecotourism goals
- Provide proposed alternative wording when you want to change things
- Include a reason for change. Back this up with supporting info if possible
- Highlight concerns but also indicate areas of support
- For area based suggestions provide co-ordinates
- Maps can be helpful. SANBI or EKZNW can support – contact [k.sink@sanbi.org.za](mailto:k.sink@sanbi.org.za) or [tamsyn.livingstone@kznwildlife.com](mailto:tamsyn.livingstone@kznwildlife.com)

## Possible Aspects to Comment On

- The ocean is facing growing threats from unsustainable developments, at present on 0.5% of South Africa's oceans are protected. It is important to emphasise the need for protection of the ocean from mining, seismic surveys, petroleum activities, industrial fishing and sea cage mariculture.
- Consider adding support for exclusion of bottom trawling from relevant MPAs if supported
- Consider adding support for exclusion of oil and gas exploration i.e seismic surveys from MPAs
- Highlight the importance of (& need for increased budget) for compliance and enforcement
- Note any positive aspects of stakeholder consultation process and the need for further consultation opportunities to ensure that MPAs are supported by impacted stakeholders.
- Emphasise the importance of education and awareness and the role that MPAs can play in this area
- Consider highlighting the importance of monitoring and adaptive management in MPAs
- Congratulate DEA on this step forward for conservation