Report on findings from the independent evaluation of the implementation of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan

Director of National Parks
Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

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ORIMA pays respect to First Nations peoples past and present, their cultures and traditions and acknowledges their continuing connection to Land, Sea and Community.

The ORIMA Research team would like to acknowledge and thank all the participants from across Australia who were involved in the research. Their willingness to share their experiences, engage in open and honest discussions, and reflect on strategies for improvement was critical to informing the research findings presented in this report.

*ORIMA Research is privileged to have had our First Nations Community Interviewer artwork completed by **Tristan Pwerl Duggie**. The artwork depicts ORIMA Research's core values of conducting work in an ethical manner with honesty, integrity, respect, and humility. The painting represents ORIMA's First Nations Community Interviewers humbly visiting the country and Community of other First Nations Peoples, sitting courteously with, listening with integrity, and respectfully sharing the views and thoughts of First Nations Peoples.*

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Executive Summary

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The Australian and state and territory governments **designate 'Marine Protected Areas' (MPAs)** – regions of the ocean where human activity is restricted and regulated to protect marine life and support sustainable use. MPAs include **marine parks managed by state and territory governments** and **Australian Marine Parks (AMPs) managed by the Commonwealth Government**.

For Commonwealth managed marine parks, the EPBC Act mandates the preparation of **'management plans' to guide the governance and regulation** of each AMP/ AMP network. These plans contain **seven 'management programs'**, each of which covers a number of priority areas listing planned outcomes and specific actions to be undertaken.

ORIMA Research was commissioned to conduct an **independent evaluation of the implementation of the management plan for the Temperate East Marine Parks Network** (herein referred to as the Temperate East Network) which is set to expire in mid-2028. The methodology for this evaluation adopted a multi-phased approach, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Overview of evaluation methodology

The evaluation framework identified two core evidence sources:

- **Documentary evidence** – sourced through administrative data provided by Parks Australia and a desktop review conducted by ORIMA researchers.
- **Stakeholder and First Nations peoples engagement** – undertaken by ORIMA researchers. A total of n=85 stakeholders and First Nations peoples participated in the evaluation and spoke from either a perspective specific to the Temperate East Network, or from a national perspective with relevance to the Network.

FINDINGS RELATING TO OVERALL EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The **Temperate East Network demonstrated positive progress** in implementing the actions and achieving the intended outcomes across its management programs.

Overall, the evaluation identified a range of **strengths and achievements** in relation to the implementation of the Temperate East Network Management Plan, including the:

- **Development of robust and structured frameworks, strategies and policies** – such as the 'Communication, Education and Awareness Strategy' and the 'Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy'.
- **Progress in ecological baseline data collection** – which provided critical insights into the natural values and pressures within the Temperate East Network.

- **Collaboration and partnerships with First Nations communities, the science community, private enterprise and government agencies** – which leveraged expertise and resources to improve marine park management.
- **Effective assessments and compliance activities** – supported by the timely implementation of a range of policies, procedures and partnerships to support achievement of the relevant management program areas.

However, a number of **limitations** were also identified through the evaluation, including:

- **Remote and offshore nature of the parks** – the isolated and deep-sea nature of many parks in the Temperate East Network made implementation challenging, particularly in relation to tourism, monitoring, compliance, and communication and stakeholder engagement.
- **Engagement with Traditional Owners, First Nations partners, organisations and users was not fully effective** – while a range of efforts were identified to meaningfully engage First Nations peoples, a few First Nations partners reported that actions were not inclusive of all relevant First Nations partners or Traditional Owners with the necessary Cultural and Sea Country Knowledge, or did not effectively enable co-management approaches.

Gaps in data for some programs areas – limited data on progress of some actions and outcomes within the management plan was identified as a barrier to assessing the effectiveness of the management plan's implementation and making evidence-based management decisions.

- **Limited communication and engagement with the broader community** – many stakeholders highlighted the need for increased public awareness and education about marine parks, to help foster a greater understanding of marine park values, build support for management decisions, and encourage community participation in conservation efforts.
- **Appropriately balancing protection of ecological, social and economic values –** this was found to be an ongoing challenge, due to the diversity of viewpoints identified in relation to the balance of protection for ecological and other values. However, clearly communicating the evidence-based rationale for management decisions should go some way to addressing these concerns.
- **Limited effectiveness of the Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC) process** – both TEMPAC members and Parks Australia staff raised concerns about the effectiveness of the current advisory committee model. However, the need for ongoing and in-depth engagement of a range of stakeholders was acknowledged, suggesting that a more inclusive and collaborative approach could better capture diverse stakeholder perspectives for consideration in decision-making processes.

FINDINGS RELATING TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OF THE TEMPERATE EAST NETWORK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The **specific program grades indicated positive progress overall**. Two programs were assessed as 'good', three were assessed as 'good with some concerns' and two were assessed as having 'significant concerns'. None were assessed as 'critical'. Specific findings for each program are outlined overleaf.

Communication, Education and Awareness Program	
Good with some concerns	The **Communication, Education and Awareness Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcome of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the nine planned actions, five were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing', while the remaining four were deemed 'partially complete'. Although several actions were only partially completed, the evidence suggests that these efforts were reasonable given the remoteness of many marine parks within the network. However, there remains scope to enhance the program's effectiveness, particularly in improving awareness, understanding, and support for marine park management among community stakeholders and users of the network.
Tourism and Visitor Experience Program	
Significant concerns	The **Tourism and Visitor Experience Program** was assessed as having 'significant concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met' or 'unknown'. Of the nine planned actions, three were assessed as 'completed', five were deemed 'partially completed' and one 'not commenced'. Although several actions were only partially completed and not commenced, the evidence suggests that these efforts were reasonable given the remoteness of many marine parks within the network.
Indigenous Program	
Significant concerns	The **Indigenous Engagement Program** was assessed as having 'significant concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the eight planned actions, one was assessed as 'completed', five were deemed 'partially completed', one 'implemented with modifications' and one 'not commenced'. It is important to note that feedback from First Nations partners for this program was limited, with only three participating in the stakeholder engagement phase of the evaluation specifically in relation to the Temperate East Network. Nevertheless, opportunities were identified to improve the program's effectiveness, particularly by strengthening co-management approaches that embed early engagement with First Nations communities and ensuring more appropriate and adequate engagement.

Marine Science Program

Good with some concerns

The **Marine Science Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the eleven planned actions, three were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing', one 'implemented with modification' and seven 'partially completed'.

The evaluation identified significant improvements over the life of the plan, particularly in the development of baseline ecological datasets and enhanced collaboration between Parks Australia and other stakeholders to strengthen marine park management.

Assessments and Authorisations Program

Good

Overall, the grade for the actions in the **Assessments and Authorisations Program** was assessed as good. The outcome of the management program was assessed to be 'fully met' and six out of seven of the planned actions were 'completed' or 'ongoing', with one deemed as 'not commenced', and with positive stakeholder feedback provided.

While A40 (*develop an effective and efficient process to assess new technologies and gear types to allow for the use of new equipment during the life of this plan if appropriate*) was assessed as 'not commenced', this was not considered a significant gap. Evidence indicated that fisheries agencies were responsible for development and impact assessment of new technologies and gear types , suggesting the action may not have been required during the plan's implementation. As a result, its non-completion did not impede the overall aims of the management program.

Parks Protection and Management Program

Good with some concerns

The **Parks Protection and Management Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcome of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the nine planned actions, six were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing', while the remaining three were assessed as 'partially completed'. Although several actions were only partially completed, the evidence suggests that these efforts were making positive progress.

Overall, the evaluation found that more timely and genuine collaboration, along with improved knowledge-sharing and awareness of activities among stakeholders, could further help to enhance the effectiveness of the program's implementation.

Compliance Program	
Good	Overall, the grade for the actions in the **Compliance Program** was assessed as 'good'. Of the outcomes of the management program, two were assessed to be 'fully' or 'substantially' met, and two were assessed as 'partially met'. However, low levels of non-compliance based on available data suggests strong performance overall. Of the six planned actions, four were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing' and two were assessed as 'partially completed'. Positive stakeholder feedback was also provided.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Based on the evaluation findings, it is recommended that the following matters be considered when developing the next plan for the Temperate East Network:

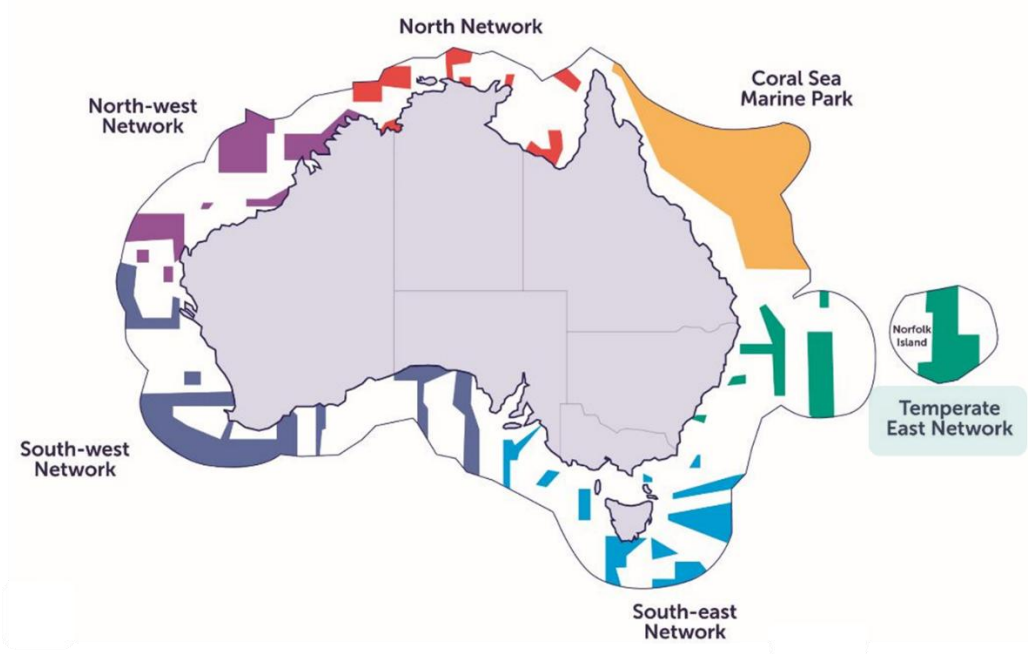
- **Demonstrating how robust evidence has been used, particularly for zoning decisions** – stakeholders reported an expectation that any future management plans would clearly draw from the evidence and data now available. They expected such an approach to be transparent and well-communicated to ensure clarity and explain why decisions had been made.
- **Ensuring comprehensive and effective engagement with key stakeholder groups** – by incorporating early, wide-reaching and ongoing engagement with key groups of park users.
- **Addressing the unique needs of localised settings/ parks within the network** – such as by considering specific place-based requirements in consultation with relevant individuals or organisations to reflect unique cultural and traditional values and address the community's distinct needs.
- **Embedding cultural perspectives and prioritising First Nations perspectives in the management of Sea Country through:**
    - Adopting co-management approaches that embed early engagement with First Nations communities and opportunities for First Nations partners to shape the priorities.
    - Avoiding "blanket approaches" to cultural engagement, by tailoring strategies to reflect the diverse ways First Nations groups care for Sea Country.
    - Ensuring information is based on up-to-date and impartial mapping of all relevant First Nations peoples and organisations who have cultural governance and ownership of marine parks.
- **Improving monitoring, evaluation, and accessibility of management plan actions** – by incorporating key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets to make measuring and evaluating action and outcome performance easier, as well as providing simplified toolkits and/ or raising awareness of summaries of management plans to improve usability and accessibility for stakeholders.
- **Responding to the '30 by 30' commitment** – including considering implications of potential changes to zoning arrangements. In doing so, it will be important to clearly communicate the evidence-based need and benefits of commitment to '30 by 30' in an Australian context.
- **Aligning with state management plans** – if possible, considering synchronising review and renewal cycles to enable simultaneous consultation and communication about changes, as well as further collaboration to streamline permit applications.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The oceans surrounding Australia are foundational to our way of life – offering important places for recreation, supporting industries and jobs and contributing to our food and energy security. To safeguard the health of these waters, and the variety of ocean life that inhabits them, the Australian and state and territory governments designate 'Marine Protected Areas' (MPAs) – regions of the ocean where human activity is restricted and regulated to protect marine life and ecosystems. MPAs Include marine parks managed by state and territory governments and Australian Marine Parks (AMPs) managed by the Australian Government. AMPs are organised into marine park networks, with the exception of the Coral Sea, and include the Temperate East Marine Parks Network (herein referred to as the Temperate East Network). Figure 2 (below) shows the six AMPs/ AMP networks, with the Temperate East Network highlighted in green.

Figure 2: Australian Marine Parks



The Director of National Parks (the Director) is a statutory office and Commonwealth corporate entity and is supported by Parks Australia. Parks Australia is a division within the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). One of the Director's roles is to manage AMPs (and all other Commonwealth reserves) in accordance with the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). The EPBC Act mandates the preparation of 'management plans' to guide the governance and regulation of each AMP/ AMP network, to be renewed every ten years. These plans contain a range of 'management programs', each of which covers a number of priority areas listing planned outcomes and specific actions to be undertaken in the pursuit of these outcomes. The seven management programs are: Communication, Education and Awareness; Tourism and Visitor Experience; Indigenous Engagement; Marine Science; Assessments; Parks Protection and Management; and Compliance.

The management plan for the Temperate East Network is the first to have been developed since the Network was established. This management plan is set to expire in 2028, requiring the completion of two processes beforehand:

1. **An independent evaluation of the implementation of the current Temperate East Network Management Plan** – providing a retrospective look at how the Plan has been implemented in practice since 2018.
2. **The preparation of a new Temperate East Network Management Plan for the next 10-year cycle** (2028-2038).

ORIMA Research was commissioned to conduct the independent evaluation of the implementation of the current management plan. The evaluation drew on a range of evidence sources, including a review of collated documentary evidence provided by Parks Australia and engagement with a range of stakeholders as well as First Nations peoples. The outcomes of this evaluation, alongside a range of other consultations and activities, will contribute to the second process – the development of a new management plan for the next 10-year cycle.

1.2. Project objectives

The overarching aim of the project was to **conduct an independent evaluation of the implementation of five expiring management plans** (with this report focusing on the evaluation of the implementation of the Temperate East Network Management Plan). More specifically, the evaluation sought to:

- **Facilitate the generation of a collectively agreed evaluation framework**, and methods for evaluating the management plan's program implementation.
- **Engage with stakeholders and First Nations peoples to understand and define their metrics of satisfaction** with the implementation of the plan.
- **Address a range of key evaluation questions, with a key focus on assessing the performance of planned actions listed in each management program and progress towards the intended outcomes** to assign completion status, trend and effectiveness ratings.
- **Provide recommendations to inform the preparation of the next management plan** (including but not limited to recommendations for goals, desired outcomes and actions).

This evaluation forms just one part of the review of the expiring management plans and development of new plans. Key directions for the review were outlined prior to the evaluation (including ensuring 30% of Australia's ocean is highly protected and limiting intensive activities). Subsequent statutory review processes are also planned.[1]

[1] *Review of the 2018 Australian Marine Park management plans: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/consultations-reviews/review-2018-australian-marine-park-management-plans/*

1.3. Methodology

The methodology for this project adopted a multi-phased approach as depicted in Figure 3 (below), incorporating sequential stages to ensure a comprehensive and systematic evaluation process.

Figure 3: Methodology overview

1.3.1. Development of evaluation framework

The evaluation framework was developed through an iterative, structured process of drafting, consultation and refinement. Initial development was led by ORIMA, whereby a draft framework was developed based on the Temperate East Network Management Plan and program logic. This was followed by a series of targeted workshops with Parks Australia, the Australian Marine Parks First Nations Reference Group and Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committee (AMPAC) members. Written feedback from AMPAC members was also provided and incorporated where relevant. This process ensured the framework was methodologically robust, contextually appropriate and aligned with stakeholder expectations.

The evaluation framework identified two core evidence sources:

- **Documentary evidence** – sourced through administrative data provided by Parks Australia and a desktop review conducted by ORIMA Research.
- **Stakeholder and First Nations peoples engagement** – undertaken by ORIMA Research.

More detail about the evaluation framework is provided in section 1.5.

1.3.2. Desktop review

During the desktop review process, key documents and data sources were collected as evidence to assess the implementation of the Temperate East Network Management Plan actions and outcomes. Some documents and data sources were supplied by the Parks Australia project team while others were sourced via desktop searches of publicly available information.

Documentary evidence that directly demonstrated the fulfilment of actions and outcomes was prioritised in the desktop review (e.g. policy documentation, official reports or media activities). Where direct evidence was absent or insufficient, indirect evidence was also used (that is, references to activity conducted to fulfil actions and outcomes without clear evidence of the activity itself, such as AMPAC meeting communiqués noting discussion of activities conducted to fulfil actions and outcomes; or self-reported evidence in self-assessment documents). Key findings and evidence points were recorded against the evaluation framework and reviewed to build an initial evidence base for the evaluation of actions and outcomes. For actions and outcomes where insufficient evidence was provided, requests for data were compiled and submitted to Parks Australia.

ETHICS ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL

Prior to the commencement of the external stakeholder engagement, the project was submitted for review by the ORIMA Research's National Mental Health and Research Committee (NMHRC) approved Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) to ensure the evaluation was conducted in an ethical, safe and culturally responsive manner. Ethics approval was granted on 4 February 2026: HREC Reference Number 0012026.

1.3.3. Stakeholder and First Peoples engagement

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for the engagement was stakeholders and First Nations peoples with experience or expertise relevant to either the Temperate East Network specifically or marine parks nationally.

The following stakeholder groups were targeted for engagement:

- Parks Australia staff
- Government agencies (both federal and state/ territory agencies)
- Industry and community groups, such as:
    - Commercial fishing industry representatives
    - Recreational fishing and boating groups
    - Tourism operators
    - Conservation/ environmental organisations
    - Industry representatives (including from shipping, offshore energy and space/ technology industries)
    - Researchers and data custodians
    - AMPAC members and members of the Australian Marine Parks First Nations Reference Group.[2]

In addition, engagement was conducted with First Nations peoples and partners, including appropriate Traditional Owner groups and stakeholders who were able to speak about Sea Country as relevant to the evaluation.

SAMPLE DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Comprehensive stakeholder mapping was undertaken based on the findings from desk research on relevant individuals and organisations, and consultation with Parks Australia staff, AMPAC committee members and members of the Australian Marine Parks First Nations Reference Group.

Stakeholder engagement was conducted between 26 February and 14 May 2026. A total of **n=195** stakeholders and First Nations peoples participated in the evaluation of the five expiring marine park management plans, via **82 in-depth interviews** of up to one hour[3] and **15 workshops** of up to two hours in duration.[4]

Of the **n=195** total participants, **n=58** spoke from a perspective specific to the Temperate East Network, and a further **n=27** spoke from a national perspective with relevance to the Network. Each of these participants fell into one or more of the key stakeholder groups identified during the

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[2] *AMPAC and First Nations Refence Group members were also consulted during the project establishment and evaluation framework development stages as advisory groups for the project.*

[3] *In a small number of cases, stakeholders elected to complete their interview by providing feedback in writing.*

[4] *Workshop (WS), n=up to 10 people; In-depth interview (IDI), n=up to 3 participants*

stakeholder mapping phase, with some contributing from multiple key perspectives. The numbers of participants who contributed from each stakeholder perspective are outlined in the table overleaf.

Key perspective		Number of participants who spoke from key perspective
Temperate East Marine Parks Network	Parks Australia staff	*n=5*
	State government agencies	*n=4*
	First Nations peoples/ organisations	*n=3*
	Researchers/ data custodians	*n=15*
	Industry and community groups: Commercial and recreational fishing representatives	*n=11*
	Industry and community groups: Tourism operators	*n=5*
	Industry and community groups: Conservation/ environmental organisations	*n=9*
	Norfolk Island Stakeholders	*n=18*
	AMPAC Members	*n=10*
Across all Parks/ Park Networks	Parks Australia/ Marine Park staff	*n=9*
	Federal government agencies/ departments	*n=7*
	Industry and community groups: Commercial and recreational fishing representatives	*n=6*
	Industry and community groups: Tourism operators	*n=1*
	Industry and community groups: Conservation/ environmental organisations	*n=4*

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

To support the discussions, ORIMA developed a comprehensive discussion guide aligned with the evaluation objectives. A flexible and adaptive approach was applied during discussions to ensure the collection of meaningful data and insights, while also allowing stakeholders the opportunity to share their views and perspectives. It was important to establish which evaluation questions were most applicable to each participant. To assist with this, participants were invited to complete a short questionnaire ahead of their interview or workshop to nominate the scope and areas of their involvement in marine parks, as well as to provide initial feedback in relation to relevant management program areas.

ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

In conducting this evaluation, a range of assumptions were made, and several potential research limitations were identified. While action has been taken to ensure the robustness of any assumptions and minimise the impact of potential limitations on the evaluation, these should nonetheless be considered when interpreting the findings.

More specifically, the **following assumptions** were made:

- **Accuracy of documentary evidence** – the evaluation assumes that administrative data and documentation provided by Parks Australia accurately reflect the timing, scope and completion of reported outputs.

- **Representativeness of consulted stakeholders** – based on the stakeholder mapping conducted, it is assumed that the engaged stakeholders reasonably reflect the diversity of perspectives across user groups, jurisdictions and regions within the network. Where key stakeholder groups were unable to be engaged as part of the evaluation, this has been noted in the limitations section below.

The following **potential research limitations** were identified:

- **Some limitations in the coverage of stakeholder participation** – the stakeholder engagement process faced challenges in ensuring comprehensive representation, with certain groups underrepresented due to factors such as lack of availability to attend sessions, being on leave during the research period, or not responding to participation requests. Notably, stakeholders from remote or isolated areas, such as Lord Howe Island, and some First Nations communities did not participate in the research, which may have resulted in gaps from not capturing their perspectives.
- **Reliance on stakeholder perceptions due to data gaps** – in the absence of consistent, outcome-level monitoring data across program areas, some parts of the evaluation relied more heavily on stakeholder perceptions and qualitative evidence to assess implementation effectiveness and outcomes.
- **Variability in data availability across networks** – the availability and quality of documentary evidence varied between program areas, limiting the ability to assess implementation consistently.

1.4. Understanding this report

STRUCTURE OF REPORT

This evaluation is split across two broad categories:

1. **Findings relating to overall evaluation questions** – this section addresses the broader evaluation questions, focusing on the design of the plan, its assessment and monitoring processes, responsiveness and adaptability, and key considerations for the development of future plans.
2. **Findings relating to program implementation** – in this section, the implementation of each management program is assessed. This involves evaluating the implementation of individual actions, assessing the achievement of intended outcomes, and providing an overall assessment of program implementation. Key strengths, achievements, barriers and limitations are also highlighted.

Based on these findings, the final section of this report (Chapter 11), provides a list of conclusions and a set of key learnings and recommendations for developing the next Temperate East Network Management Plan.

NOTES ON INTERPRETATION

- All acronyms used in this report have been specified the first time they are used in each chapter.
- When the term ‘stakeholders’ is used, it refers to all types of stakeholders consulted in the project. When findings pertain to a specific group of stakeholders only, this has been specified (e.g. AMPAC members, Parks Australia staff, First Nations peoples and partners).
- The terms ‘none’, ‘a few’, ‘many’, ‘most’ and ‘all’ have been used to refer to the proportion of stakeholders consulted who expressed a certain opinion or perspective. These terms are defined in the ‘Stakeholder engagement metrics’ section of Appendix A.

1.5. Understanding the evaluation framework

There are three components to the evaluation framework, outlined below. To see the full framework, please refer to Appendix B.

OVERALL EVALUATION QUESTIONS

A set of overarching evaluation questions was developed to guide assessment at the whole-of-plan level. These questions were initially drafted by ORIMA and refined through consultation with Parks Australia, the Australian Marine Parks First Nations Reference Group, and AMPAC members.

The key evaluation questions were:

1. **Were the management programs in this management plan implemented effectively?** (Including the extent to which management plan actions and outcomes were achieved according to the performance information matrix, see section overleaf).
2. **To what extent do stakeholders perceive the activities occurring in zones to be consistent with zone objectives**, at an overall level?
3. Based on stakeholder perceptions, **how well aligned was the implementation of the plans with external regulatory settings and management activities**?
4. **To what extent do stakeholders perceive that there was an effective and efficient balance between the use of grants and other implementation mechanisms** in addressing management plan objectives?
5. **What lessons can we learn for future management plans**?

Together, they provide a structure for synthesising findings across programs and plans.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION MATRIX (PIM)

The Performance Information Matrix (PIM) is the core analytical tool used in the evaluation to systematically assess program implementation.

For each action and outcome in the management programs, the PIM defines a consistent set of measurement components to guide assessment:

- **Outputs** – The tangible deliverables linked to each action (not applicable to outcomes).
- **Measures of success** – The criteria used to determine whether an action or outcome has been achieved.
- **Indicators** – The observable evidence used to assess performance against each measure of success.
- **Data sources** – The data used to assess each indicator (e.g. documentary evidence, stakeholder feedback).

This structure provides a clear connection between planned activities, evidence and evaluative judgement. It ensures consistent and transparent assessment across programs. The full PIM for the Temperate East Network is provided in Appendix B.

RATING APPROACH AND MEASUREMENT METHODS

A set of standardised rating approaches were developed to assess performance across actions, outcomes and programs. These approaches were designed to align with Parks Australia's reporting requirements and the nature of the management plan. Specifically, the evaluation assigned the following:

- **Action completion status** – drawing on documentary evidence and stakeholder feedback, each action was assessed as 'completed', 'ongoing', 'implemented with modifications', 'partially completed or implemented' or 'not commenced'.

- **Program implementation effectiveness ratings** – the achievement of actions and outcomes at the management program level was assessed as 'good', 'good with some concerns', having 'significant concerns', 'critical' or 'unknown'.
- **Outcome achievement rating** – outcome effectiveness was assessed as 'fully met', 'substantially met', 'partially met' or 'not met'. Trend ratings were also assigned for each outcome (i.e. indicating a positive, negative or stable trend).

Further detail about each rating approach is provided at Appendix A.

Quality and Compliance Statement

This project was conducted in accordance with the international quality standard ISO 20252, the international information security standard ISO 27001, as well as the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act 1988 (Cth). ORIMA Research also adheres to the Privacy (Market and Social Research) Code 2021 administered by the Australian Data and Insights Association (ADIA).

2. Temperate East Marine Parks Network context

This chapter presents background information about the Temperate East Marine Parks Network to support understanding of its contextual environment when interpreting evaluation findings.

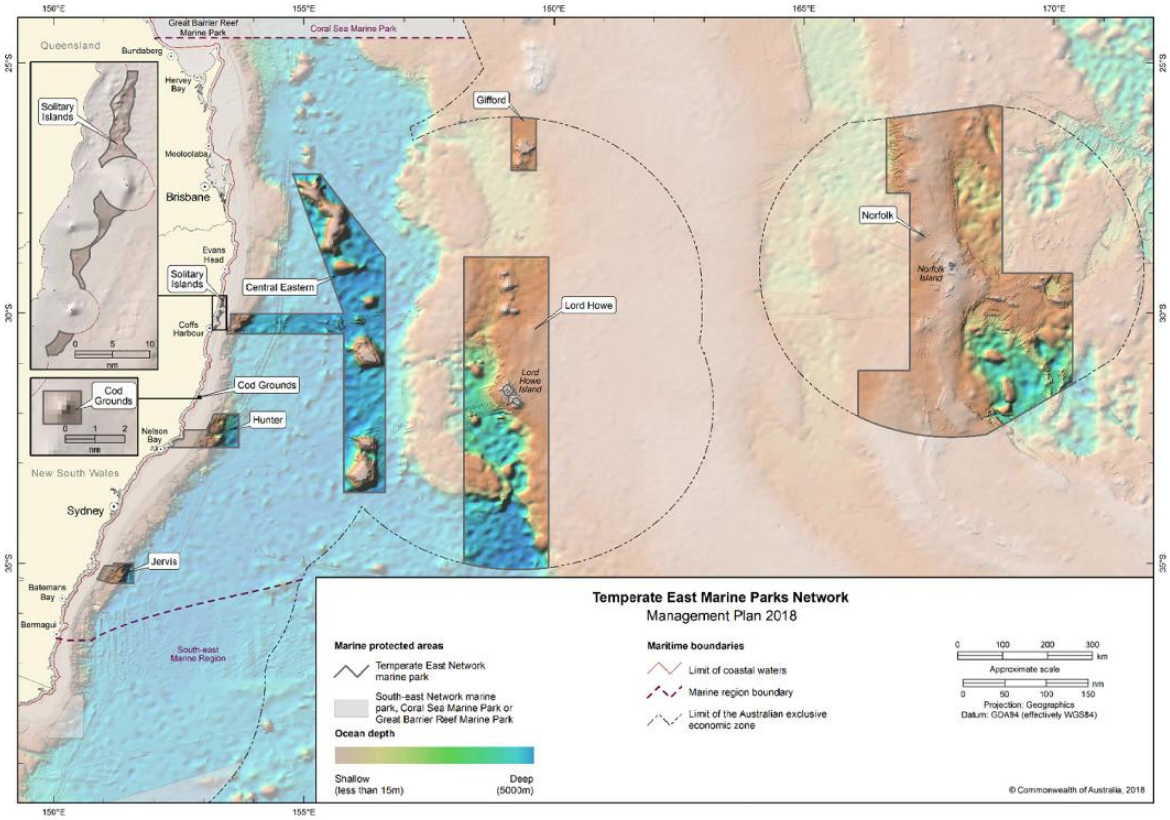
2.1. About the Temperate East Marine Parks Network

The Temperate East Marine Parks Network extends from the southern boundary of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Queensland to Bermagui in southern New South Wales, as well as the waters surrounding Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands. The region covers approximately 1.47 million km^2 of temperate and subtropical waters and abuts the coastal waters of southern Queensland and New South Wales. The Temperate East Network covers 383,339 km^2 and **includes the following eight marine parks**:

1. Gifford Marine Park
2. Norfolk Marine Park
3. Lord Howe Marine Park
4. Central Eastern Marine Park
5. Solitary Islands Marine Park
6. Cod Grounds Marine Park
7. Hunter Marine Park, and
8. Jervis Marine Park.

The Temperate East Network is characterised by continental shelf, slope and abyssal plain/ deep ocean floor, with significant variation in seafloor features including tropical and cold-water reef systems, seamounts and canyons. The East Australian Current is the dominant oceanographic influence in the region, bringing warm waters from the Coral Sea down the outer edge of the continental shelf, extending the range of tropical species into subtropical and temperate waters. For this reason, the region supports high species diversity among corals, crustaceans, echinoderms, molluscs, sea sponges, sharks, whales and seabirds. This is particularly true in places like Lord Howe Island and Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, where both warm and cold-water species flourish alongside each other. A map of the Temperate East Network is shown in Figure 4 overleaf.

Figure 4: Temperate East Marine Parks Network[5]



2.2. Temperate East Network values

The Australian Marine Park values are the guiding principles for marine park management and decision-making. The Temperate East Network values include:

- **Natural values** – key ecological features such as seamount chains, ridges, reefs and canyons, as well as several vulnerable and internationally threatened species including grey nurse sharks, migratory white sharks, migratory humpback whales, black cod, marine turtles, bony fish and several species of seabird.
- **Cultural values** – First Nations peoples of eastern Australia have been sustainably using and managing their Sea Country for thousands of years. It is recognised that spiritual corridors extend into nearshore and offshore waters, that several marine animals are Totems for First Nations peoples, and that songlines pass through marine parks in the Temperate East.
- **Heritage values** – the network is home to many historic shipwrecks, including the HMS Sirius, a flagship of the First Fleet which was wrecked on the coral reef off Slaughter Bay, Norfolk Island in 1790. The Temperate East Network also includes the Lord Howe Island Group World Heritage Property which supports several endemic species and subspecies of plants and animals.
- **Socio-economic values** – marine tourism activities, including fishing, snorkelling, diving and wildlife watching are important commercial activities that offer unique visitor experiences at

[5] *Director of National Parks. (2018). Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018. Australian Marine Parks. https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/9b2c9381d231f410bf662f01b9a096d8/amp-document-temperate-east-management-plan-2018.pdf*

reefs, islands and lagoons, particularly around Lord Howe and Norfolk Marine Parks. Commercial fishing, shipping and port-related activities are also industries of national economic significance in this region. The island communities of Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island have a particularly strong affinity and historic connection to the ocean surrounding them as a source of food and for a range of social and economic benefits.

2.3. Temperate East Network pressures

The Temperate East Network faces a range of identified pressures including:

- **Climate change** and its complex environmental impacts including changes in temperature, sea level, acidification, ocean currents, increased storm frequency and intensity, species range extensions and local extinctions. Habitats particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change in the Temperate East Network include Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs and other reef and fish communities.
- **Changes in hydrology** including rivers, estuaries and other waterways potentially discharging increased sediment loads and pollutants into the marine environment, resulting in increased turbidity and siltation, impacting on species that inhabit or spawn in coastal, estuary and offshore waters. Examples of habitat vulnerable to changes in hydrology include reefs and fish communities surrounding islands in the Temperate East Network.
- **Extraction of living resources** through illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing can modify natural populations of target and bycatch species and cause physical disturbance to habitats. Examples of habitats, key ecological features and species vulnerable to such impacts in the Temperate East Network include reef and shoal habitats, the Tasmantid and Lord Howe seamount chains and species of shark, dolphin and fish.
- **Habitat modification** can occur directly through physical disturbance or indirectly through the presence of infrastructure. Examples of habitats and species vulnerable to habitat modification pressures in the Temperate East include reef, shoal and pinnacle habitats and species of seabirds, fish, dolphin and shark.
- **Human presence** via activities such as boating, fishing and snorkelling has the potential to impact marine park values directly through contact from collision or indirectly through changes in behaviour from disturbance. Examples of habitats and species vulnerable to human disturbance include reef habitats and species of dolphin and seabird.
- **Invasive species** introduced through vessel ballast and bilge water discharge, vessel biofouling, accidental or deliberate transport and land-based activities create vulnerability for islands, reefs and other shallow-water ecosystems and native species in the Temperate East Network. Examples of habitats and species vulnerable to the impacts of invasive species include reef and island habitats and nesting seabirds.
- **Marine pollution** including the emission of noise or light, marine debris (e.g. plastics and lost fishing gear), and discharge of oil, chemicals or waste. Pollution can be detrimental to marine life, leading to contamination of ecosystems, entanglement, or ingestion by marine species. Examples of habitat, key ecological features and species vulnerable to marine pollution in the Temperate East Network include island, reef, and other shallow water habitats such as Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs, and species of dolphin, whale and seabird.

2.4. Management of the Temperate East Network

The Temperate East Network is managed by Parks Australia staff within the Marine and Island Parks Branch, on behalf of the Director of National Parks. This is done in collaboration with:

- **Traditional Owners and First Nations peoples**

- **Government agencies (Commonwealth, state and local)**, and
- **The Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC)** – an expert advisory committee representing a range of perspectives relevant to marine park management in the Temperate East Network. The Committee provides strategic advice to Parks Australia on marine park management issues at a regional level.

3. Findings relating to overall evaluation questions

*This chapter presents the findings **related to the broader evaluation questions**, focusing on plan design, assessment and monitoring, responsiveness and adaptability, and considerations for future plans.*

3.1. Overall findings

Overall, the Temperate East Network demonstrated positive progress in implementing the actions and achieving the intended outcomes across its management programs. This is reflected in the program grades, with one program assessed as 'good', four assessed as 'good with some concerns', two assessed as having 'significant concerns' and none being deemed as 'critical'.

The evaluation identified a **range of strengths and achievements** in relation to the overall implementation of the Temperate East Management Plan, including the:

- **Development of robust and structured frameworks, strategies and policies** – such as of the '*Communication, Education and Awareness Strategy*' and the '*Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy*', both of which provided clear guidance for implementing effective actions throughout the duration of the plan.
    - However, the 'First Nations engagement and cultural heritage strategy' was noted as not having been completed, and the '*Australian Marine Parks Science Strategy*' was implemented with modifications, with stakeholder feedback suggesting that clearer strategies could go some way to assisting in overcoming shortcomings in these program areas.
- **Progress in ecological baseline data collection** – which provided critical insights into the natural values and pressures within the Temperate East Network. This data also supported evidence-based decision-making and adaptive management, ensuring actions were informed by robust scientific evidence where possible.
- **Collaboration and partnerships with First Nations communities, the science community, private enterprise and government agencies** – it was noted that there had been improvements in communication and collaboration with a range of stakeholders and organisations to support the plan's implementation, which had been beneficial. For example, Parks Australia built strong relationships with Norfolk Island stakeholders, tailoring engagement and management efforts to support the community's continued, effective and largely independent management of the waters surrounding the island. These efforts were appropriately focused on building trust, aligning management priorities, and foregrounding local needs.
- **Effective assessments, authorisations and compliance activities** – supported by the timely implementation of a range of policies, procedures and partnerships to support achievement of the relevant management program areas. For example, the introduction of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) and targeted enforcement operations reduced non-compliance incidents, demonstrating the success of the application of risk-based approaches and innovative technologies.

However, a number of **limitations** were also identified through the evaluation, including:

- **Remote and offshore nature of the parks** – the isolated and deep-sea nature of many parks in the Temperate East Network made implementation challenging, particularly for tourism, monitoring, compliance, and communication and stakeholder engagement. Limited accessibility

and Parks Australia's resource constraints further hindered consistent management and utilisation of these parks.

- **Engagement with Traditional Owners, First Nations partners, organisations and users was not fully effective** – while a range of efforts were identified to meaningfully engage First Nations peoples, it was felt by First Nations partners that meaningful collaboration and best-practice co-management approaches were not always adopted, which reduced the ability of First Nations peoples to contribute their cultural knowledge and expertise to marine park management. A few First Nations partners also reported that actions were not always inclusive of all relevant First Nations partners or Traditional Owners with the necessary Cultural and Sea Country Knowledge. Challenges in addressing contested areas and balancing the interests of different groups was acknowledged throughout the evaluation. To address these challenges, those who participated in the engagement suggested the use of up-to-date, impartial mapping, clear communication between Parks Australia staff and community members, and the establishment of informal engagement avenues with First Nations peoples, to enable participation.
- **Gaps in data for some program areas** – limited data on the progress of some actions and outcomes within the management plan was identified as a barrier to assessing the effectiveness of the management plan's implementation. In addition, the limited collection of specific data, such as socio-economic data and marine park awareness and perceptions data hindered a comprehensive understanding of progress and/ or the ability to assess the broader impacts of marine park management (while also reducing the ability to make informed decisions that balanced environmental, social and economic outcomes). Addressing these data gaps will be important to ensure accurate measures can be obtained of the plan's implementation.
- **Limited communication and engagement with the broader community** – while efforts to engage specific stakeholder groups were noted, the evaluation found that broader community engagement remained an important gap. Many stakeholders highlighted the need for increased public awareness and education about marine parks, including their purpose, management, and benefits. It was felt that improved outreach and communication strategies targeting broader park users and the general public could help foster a greater understanding of marine park values, build support for management decisions, and encourage community participation in conservation efforts.
- **Appropriately balancing protection of ecological, social and economic values** – the evaluation found that balancing competing stakeholder interests in the Temperate East Network will be an ongoing challenge, with a range of diverse views identified in relation to the balance of protection for ecological and other values. For example, some stakeholders felt that additional work was required to effectively protect ecological values (e.g. to support greater protection of biodiversity). However, others felt that the management plan and associated zoning restrictions were overly restrictive (e.g. requiring challenging authorisations processes for simple and non-invasive scientific activities such as water sampling or restricting fishing activities in areas where these activities were not felt to compromise marine park values). While balancing competing stakeholder perspectives will be an ongoing challenge, clearly communicating the evidence-based rationale for management decisions should go some way to addressing these concerns.
- **Limited effectiveness of the Temperate East Marine Park Advisory Committee (TEMPAC) process** – both TEMPAC members and Parks Australia staff raised concerns about the effectiveness of the current advisory committee model, with stakeholder feedback suggesting the committees may not be achieving their intended role in contributing to marine park management. However, the need for ongoing and in-depth engagement with a range of stakeholders was acknowledged, suggesting that a more inclusive and collaborative approach

could better capture diverse stakeholder perspectives for consideration in decision-making processes.

3.2. Specific findings about management plan design: Level of detail provided, plan flexibility, and efficacy of monitoring and review mechanisms

- Overall, stakeholders acknowledged the challenges associated with striking a balance between providing adequate detail to support implementation, while also maintaining the required flexibility for a 10-year plan covering a range of marine parks in the Temperate East Network. Positively, some stakeholders felt that the Temperate East Network Management Plan provided an appropriate level of detail, with some describing it as their "source of truth." Stakeholders found elements such as zoning maps and overarching rules and regulations particularly valuable for supporting compliance activities.
- However, some other stakeholders viewed the plan as "overly generic", which reduced its relevance and applicability and limited place-based actions. Stakeholders reported that actions and outcomes were not always suitable for standardisation across networks, with such an approach at times felt to complicate implementation and evaluation. This concern was particularly prominent among Norfolk Island stakeholders, who felt the island required more tailored management approaches due to its unique priorities. Additionally, inconsistencies in definitions and terminology, such as varying interpretations of 'drop line fishing' across parks, were noted as challenges for effective implementation.
- Many stakeholders also felt that the plan had not effectively adapted to emerging risks, priorities, and contextual changes, particularly throughout later stages of the plan. This was generally found to be due to the prescriptive nature of some management plan actions and outcomes, or the lack of "future-proofing" of the plan to address changes in the ecological or policy environment over time. Specifically, stakeholders cited examples such as climate change threats, developments of offshore wind farms, increased use of drones for surveillance and the emergence of bird flu as an ecological threat, which they felt were not adequately addressed. Additionally, some stakeholders, particularly First Nations partners, felt the plan did not adequately respond to evolving community priorities. They noted that when changes or decisions were made, First Nations peoples were often excluded from the process.
- The evaluation also identified several challenges with the monitoring and review mechanisms, with stakeholders reporting that some actions and outcomes were "vague", ambiguous or lacked clear timeframes for completion. This was felt to make effective assessment difficult. It was suggested that outcomes include focus on productivity, reporting quality, and engagement with park users where possible.
    - Conversely, some actions and outcomes were found to be overly prescriptive, such as in identifying the government agencies and other partners to be engaged in implementation. This was particularly evident in the Compliance and Assessments and Authorisations programs, where Parks Australia staff felt that prescribed partner lists did not always align with the practical realities of a risk-based approach to implementation and enforcement. In some cases, partners were identified in the plan whom staff felt were not well placed to address the relevant risks.
- Some of the specific actions and outcomes in the Temperate East Network Management Plan were felt to be challenging to achieve or implement, particularly given the acknowledgement by stakeholders of the resource and budget constraints Parks Australia faced when implementing management activities. Examples included A3 ('*maximise the use of new technologies and partnerships to inspire people of all ages to become involved in marine park management and protection')* as well as many of the actions and outcomes in the Tourism Management Program.

3.3. Implications for future plan development

Based on the evaluation findings, it is recommended that the following matters be considered when developing the next plan for the Temperate East Network:

- **Demonstrating how robust evidence has been used, particularly for zoning decisions** – stakeholders reported an expectation that any future management plans would clearly draw from the evidence and data accrued since 2018 to ensure management and zoning decisions were based on ecological, socio-economic and cultural information available.

  They expected such an approach to be transparent and well-communicated to ensure clarity and explain why decisions had been made, which would help to enhance trust in the process of plan development and implementation. In addition, communicating evidence of the effectiveness of zoning and management in protecting and strengthening marine park values – both at the start of and throughout the duration of the plan – would help to foster greater understanding and support for marine park management.

- **Ensuring comprehensive and effective engagement with key stakeholder groups** – by incorporating early, wide-reaching and ongoing engagement with key user groups. While some stakeholders felt they had been appropriately engaged, others did not feel that consultation ahead of the plan development, or throughout its duration, had been sufficient or effective.

- **Addressing the unique needs of localised settings/ parks within the network** – by considering specific place-based requirements in consultation with relevant individuals or organisations, to ensure that the structure and program areas within the plan align with the distinct and diverse needs of communities and stakeholders across the network. For instance, tourism was not considered a relevant focus for certain marine parks in the Temperate East due to their offshore nature. Addressing cross-over between program areas was also raised as a consideration. As an example, some stakeholders suggested that communication related to compliance should be managed by the communications and/or regional teams, and suggested this action may therefore be better aligned with the communication, education and awareness management program area.

  - In the unique case of Norfolk Marine Park – the only Australian Marine Park bordering a permanent community of more than 2,000 people – stakeholders felt a separate, dedicated management plan was required. Stakeholders reported the design of the Temperate East Network Management Plan, which is structured around national priorities and objectives for offshore marine park management, does not reflect the needs, priorities and local context of Norfolk Marine Park. While stakeholders felt these needs and priorities had been well accommodated by Parks Australia over the plan's lifecycle, they were wary that this success had depended largely on the discretion of Parks Staff rather than formal legislative or planning requirements. As such, stakeholders expressed a desire for Norfolk Island's priorities to be formally recognised, enshrined and protected through a dedicated Norfolk Marine Park management plan.

- **Embedding cultural perspectives and prioritising First Nations perspectives in the management of their Sea Country through:**

  - Adopting co-management approaches that embed early and culturally appropriate engagement with First Nations communities that enable opportunities for First Nations partners to shape the priorities based on the place-based needs and requirements of relevant Sea Country.

  - Avoiding "blanket approaches" to cultural engagement, by tailoring strategies to reflect the diverse ways First Nations groups care for Sea Country, and the unique strengths

and resources available to each community (i.e. taking a place-based and community-centric approach tailored to each Traditional Owner group or community).

- Ensuring information and engagement is based upon up-to-date and impartial mapping of all relevant Traditional Owners, First Nations peoples and organisations who have Cultural governance and ownership of marine parks, to ensure all relevant partners are invited to engage in marine park management decisions for relevant Sea Country. This mapping and engagement should commence prior to the development of the next management plan, to enable the establishment of time-rich and meaningful partnerships.
- Providing more informal avenues for engagement with First Nations community members – to ensure the inclusion of individuals who may not be officially recognised as Traditional Owners (e.g. within State Government Registers) but seek to maintain connection and practise Culture. This may include both formal engagement with Parks Australia (e.g. through advisory or reference groups) or via invitations to be involved in Sea Country management activities and initiatives.

- **Improving monitoring, evaluation, and accessibility of management plan actions** – by incorporating key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets to make measuring and evaluating action and outcome performance easier, and providing simplified toolkits or 1–2 page summaries of management plans to improve usability and accessibility for stakeholders.
- **Considering Australia's '30 by 30' commitment** – including implications of potential changes to zoning arrangements. In doing so, it will be important to clearly communicate the evidence-based need and benefits of commitment to'30 by 30' in an Australian context.
- **Aligning with state Management Plans** – if possible, considering synchronising review and renewal cycles to enable simultaneous consultation and communication about changes, as well as further collaboration to streamline permit applications.

4. Findings: Communication, Education and Awareness Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the **Communication, Education and Awareness Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan.*

4.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Good with some concerns	The **Communication, Education and Awareness Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcome of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the nine planned actions, five were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing', while the remaining four were deemed 'partially complete'. Although several actions were only partially completed, the evidence suggests that these efforts were reasonable given the remoteness of many marine parks within the network. However, there remains scope to enhance the program's effectiveness, particularly in improving awareness, understanding, and support for marine park management among community stakeholders and users of the network.

Strengths and achievements

A key strength of the program was its ability to communicate with, and respond effectively to, some stakeholders in the region. Resources developed were found to be particularly impactful among more engaged groups, such as recreational fishers, who benefited from clear guidance on marine park rules and regulations.

Additionally, strong relationships were established to create resources and educate users on the values and management of marine parks, with the evaluation identifying notable success with stakeholders from Norfolk Island. These efforts highlight how activities undertaken within this program have fostered meaningful connections and delivered targeted, effective communication in specific contexts.

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

Implementation of this program faced notable weaknesses in its communication efforts with the general community, which stakeholders recognised as being constrained by the following challenges:

- The difficulty of engaging communities in relation to marine parks located far offshore, due to limited visibility and interaction.
- Limited resources within Parks Australia, with small teams needing to manage various programs and tending to have a stronger focus on terrestrial parks. While Parks Australia undertook initiatives to engage the public, such as attending festivals, stakeholder feedback indicated that these activities lacked broad reach and visibility. For example, one stakeholder reported only recently discovering the Parks Australia website while searching for recreational fishing information. Although they found the website useful, they felt more could be done to raise awareness of its existence and the information it provides.

Stakeholders also noted limited communication regarding marine park management decisions and initiatives, a concern particularly expressed by members of the Temperate East Marine Parks

Network Advisory Committee (TEMPAC) who had a strong interest in the progress and outcomes of the plan. This lack of communication contributed to negative perceptions of Parks Australia's management among stakeholders. Additionally, there was no evidence of measurement or evaluation of the impact of communication activities, making it difficult to assess their effectiveness or identify areas for improvement.

Stakeholders believed there was an appetite for further information among engaged members of the public and expressed a willingness to assist in sharing and communicating information. This highlights an opportunity for Parks Australia to better leverage stakeholder networks and improve outreach to the broader community.

4.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O1. Increased awareness, understanding and support for marine parks	Partially met	Trend getting better

Evidence

This outcome was assessed as **partially met**, with evidence indicating a slight increase in awareness, understanding, and support for marine parks amongst stakeholders. However, stakeholder feedback highlighted limited communication with the broader community.

Evidence from desktop review:

The National Environmental Science Program (NESP), in partnership with the University of Western Australia (UWA), conducted surveys at boat ramps across Australia in 2021 to establish social and economic benchmarks for Australian Marine Parks (AMPs). These surveys collected data on awareness, understanding and support for AMPs.

While a subsequent round of research is due to be completed and released in 2026, it was not available at the time of this evaluation. As such, it is not currently possible to make a robust assessment of whether awareness, understanding and support have increased over the life of the plan.[6]

Evidence from engagement:

Many participants noted a lack of communication from Parks Australia, with some highlighting that newsletters they had previously subscribed to were no longer being disseminated. These stakeholders expressed frustration at the perceived lack of consultation and communication, which contributed to negative perceptions of Parks Australia's management.

However, recreational fishing stakeholders reported an increase in understanding of marine parks within their communities over the course of the plan, particularly in relation to the functions and benefits of marine parks, reflecting positive progress in engaging this group.

[6] *NESP Social and Economic Benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks Report: https://api.research-repository.uwa.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/363774544/Navarro_et_al_D6_M12_M13_M17_Social_and_Economic_benchmarks_of_the_AMPs_FINAL.pdf*

Parks Australia staff expressed satisfaction with their efforts to promote Australian Marine Parks, particularly through targeted regional face-to-face engagement and attendance at festivals and events. However, awareness of these efforts was inconsistent among community-based stakeholders, with many reporting that community members continued to have limited awareness of marine parks.

4.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Communication, Education and Awareness Program.

Action	Completion status
A1. Develop a marketing and communication strategy for Australian Marine Parks to raise awareness and understanding of marine park values and the contribution marine parks make to enhancing Australia's wellbeing	**Completed**

Evidence:

This action was assessed as **completed**, with the marketing and communication strategy delivered in a timely manner.

However, it was noted by some stakeholders that the strategy had to date had limited effectiveness in increasing awareness and understanding of marine parks and their values among key audiences.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified the '*Communication, Education and Awareness Strategy (2021-26)*' as the guiding document for relevant activities across marine parks/ marine park networks, including the Temperate East Network. This document was found to be produced in a timely manner (i.e. within the first four years of the management plan).[7] Evidence of communication activities and initiatives that were developed or implemented in accordance with this strategy are noted against the relevant actions below.

Evidence from engagement:

Parks Australia staff cited a range of examples of activities and initiatives undertaken in line with the Communications, Education and Awareness Strategy. These included attendance at festivals and community events, communication via local newspapers and publications (e.g. on Lord Howe Island) and posts on social media.

However, when considering the effectiveness of Parks Australia's communication, education and awareness activities in raising awareness and understanding of Temperate East Marine Park values and contribution to Australia more generally, stakeholders provided mixed assessments:

- Some stakeholders felt the activities effectively engaged cohorts with a vested interest in the network (e.g. recreational and commercial fishers) and when conducted, met their information needs. They noted these activities were particularly successful when a positive

[7] *A Communication, Education and Awareness Strategy (2021-26): Internal document*

relationship existed between stakeholders and the relevant Parks Australia staff member (e.g. on Norfolk Island).

- Many stakeholders felt that there had been significant gaps in Parks Australia's communication and education efforts in the Temperate East Network, as communication and marketing activities were limited. In particular, stakeholders noted that:
    - Awareness of the Temperate East Marine Parks and their values remained low among park users and the general community. While stakeholders understood that Parks Australia faced a range of challenges to communicating with marine park users and the general population (e.g. resource constraints, challenges engaging members of the general public without vested interests and/ or in remote/ offshore marine parks), they also felt that raising awareness of the values and importance of the Temperate East Network was critical to supporting buy-in to management activities and marine conservation.
    - Communication with stakeholders was limited or inconsistent – some stakeholders, particularly those who represented or worked with marine park users, felt that they had a role to play in supporting communication and information sharing within these networks. However, some of these participants felt that they had not received or had access to information from Parks Australia that would enable them to do so, or had not received this information in a regular or timely manner.

Action	Completion status
A2. Develop online information resources to facilitate awareness of marine park values, management arrangements and visitor opportunities	**Completed**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **completed**, as the desktop review identified considerable evidence of online information resources being delivered in a timely manner.

However, only some stakeholders felt that these activities had been effective in facilitating awareness of values, management arrangement and visitor opportunities.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified considerable evidence of online information resources being developed and used. Delivery of these outputs commenced from the initial years of the management plan (i.e. between 2018-2020), highlighting the timely completion of this action.

More specifically, the desktop review identified the following online resources designed to facilitate awareness of marine park values:

- The values chapter in the Temperate East Network Management Plan itself, published 2018[8]

[8] *The Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan Chapter 2.3: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/5797254b49ade6c0ea62ff8785ca9958/amp-document-south-west-management-plan-2018.pdf*

- The Temperate East network values webpage[9]
- The '*Five that thrive in our marine parks'* website produced by the Fab Five research team[10] at the University of Adelaide (UoA) (2022), and
- The '*Mapping and characterising seabed features and benthic habitats of the Solitary Islands Marine Park in the Temperate East Marine Parks Network'* report, published in 2024.[11]

The desktop review also identified the following online resources designed to facilitate awareness of marine park management arrangements:

- The Temperate East Network Management Plan itself, published 2018[12]
- A management plan zoning and rules factsheet[13]
- The '*Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs protection zone map*'[14], and
- A 2020 multi-media campaign developed by Norfolk Island Regional Council to educate and empower the local community and visitors to take responsibility for the protection of Norfolk Marine Park (funded by the second round of Our Marine Park Grants [OMPG]).[15]

Finally, the desktop review also identified the following online resources designed to facilitate awareness of visitor opportunities:

- The '*Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Guide*'[16]
- The '*Galapagos Sharks Lord Howe Island Marine Parks'* factsheet[17]
- The '*Pimpernel Rock National Park Zone*' Factsheet[18]
- '*User Guide'* brochures developed in cooperation with NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) relevant to both the NSW state marine park waters and adjacent Commonwealth Marine Park waters at Solitary Islands,[19] and

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[9] *Temperate East Network values webpage: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/values/values-south-west-marine-parks-network/*
[10] *The 'Five that thrive in our marine parks' website: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/61ca6f9be4354e808146e47e0a59a7d0?item=1*
[11] *Mapping and characterising seabed features and benthic habitats of the Solitary Islands Marine Park in the Temperate East Marine Parks Network (2024):* https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/734c97e56886d93a15c611222d227b33/amp-simp2024-report.pdf
[12] *The Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan Chapter 2.3 (2018):* https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/5797254b49ade6c0ea62ff8785ca9958/amp-document-south-west-management-plan-2018.pdf
[13] *The Temperate East Marine Parks Network zoning and rules factsheet (year of publication unknown):* https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/8b6971a7bd97ef028a59634e94b579cc/amp-document-factsheet-south-west-management-plan.pdf
[14] *Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs protection zone map (year of publication unknown): https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/e5dff5ed5ef823e5c7df5091fcce613b/te_eliz_middleton_brochure_w_prohibition_area.pdf*
[15] *Our Marine Park Grant program – Round 2 (2020):* our-marine-park-grants-round-two-projects.pdf
[16] *Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Guide (2023): https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6ecf5cc80f1292820defeeb533603f0f/16389-elizabethmiddletonreef.pdf*
[17] *Galapagos Sharks Lord Howe Island Marine Parks (year of publication unknown):: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/57682249d600e2657bb145a0e36f1c67/galapagos-sharks.pdf*
[18] *Pimpernel Rock National Park Zone Factsheet: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/c4c3e66278ffb5f5a12a6d30167d28e5/amp-document-solitary-islands-pimpernel-rock-2020.pdf*
[19] *Solitary Islands User guide brochure (2018): https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/656304/simp-user-guide-without-zoning-map.pdf#:~:text=For%20information%20on%20Solitary%20Islands,guide%20or%20contact%20Parks*

- Advertorial content/articles published in Discover Norfolk Magazine in 2021 and 2024, promoting Norfolk Marine Park marine tourism operators and visitor experiences.[20] [21]

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, stakeholders held mixed perceptions in relation to the efficacy of online resources in facilitating awareness of marine park values, management activities and visitor opportunities. This was largely found to be the result of differing levels of awareness amongst stakeholders of online information resources, suggesting that reach of communication and education activities had been limited and/ or inconsistent.

Amongst stakeholders who were familiar with the online information resources, particularly recreational fishers, state government agencies and researchers, perceptions of these materials were broadly positive. These participants highlighted the efficacy of social media and web channels for sharing this information, and online zoning resources were particularly appreciated by recreational fishers. However, a couple of stakeholders on Norfolk Island expressed a desire for more locally relevant resources to boost interest and engagement.

Stakeholders who were unaware of the online resources assumed that communication had not occurred and/ or took this as an indication that the dissemination of such resources had not been broad or effective. Specifically, some of these stakeholders noted challenges in navigating the Parks Australia website to access the documentation they needed, describing it as overly complex and reliant on numerous subpages which reduced the user experience.

Action	Completion status
A3. Maximise the use of new technologies and partnerships (including with schools, universities, museums and non-government organisations) to inspire people of all ages to become involved in marine park management and protection	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. Although some documentary evidence of partnerships and utilisation of new technologies was identified, there was mixed feedback from stakeholders in relation to the extent to which these were maximised and the efficacy of these efforts in inspiring people to become involved in marine park management and protection.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review provided evidence of a range of partnerships, including with schools, universities, museums and non-government organisations, some of which utilised modern technology:

- An educational program (Stage 3 syllabus) developed by NSW DPI (Fisheries) and Parks Australia to teach Year 5-6 students on the NSW South Coast Sea Country cultural values. This program integrated technologies through the use of videos and classroom activities.[22]

[20] *Discover Norfolk Island Marine Park (2021):* Discover Norfolk Marine Park | Discover Norfolk Island
[21] *A Delicate Balance – Parks Australia (2024):* A Delicate Balance - Parks Australia | Discover Norfolk Island
[22] *Sea Country cultural values educational program: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/school-resources/sea-country*

- A collaboration with the Australian Museum and local Norfolk Island community to deliver educational activities at Norfolk Island Central School as part of the 2022 Norfolk Island expedition.[23]
- A public presentation by researchers at the University of New South Wales, University of Newcastle and Macquarie University at the Norfolk Discovery Centre in 2023. This incorporated use of technologies in citizen science by providing an overview of how to use the Coral Reef Health Citizen Science web page.[24]
- Collaboration with the Norfolk Island Regional Council via funding as part of OMPG2 to deliver a multi-media campaign aimed at educating and empowering local community members and visitors to responsibly care for the Norfolk Marine Park.[25]
- Advertorial content/ articles published in '*Discover Norfolk'* magazine promoting Norfolk Marine Park marine tourism operators and visitor experiences (e.g. reef snorkelling at Emily Bay and kayak tours).[26] [27]

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, stakeholder feedback in relation to this action was mixed. Some stakeholders provided positive feedback and identified examples of effective partnerships that they felt helped to inspire involvement in marine park management, including connecting scientists with other researchers to support outreach and engagement with the Lord Howe Island community, and collaborating with the Norfolk Island Council of Elders to communicate with the local community about protecting whale bird eggs.

However, many stakeholders felt that the intended impact of this action (i.e. inspiring people of all ages to become involved in marine park management and protection) was challenging and "unrealistic" to achieve and measure. As such, these stakeholders did not feel that the action had been implemented as intended. More specifically, they reported that, in their experience, partnerships had been inconsistent and the use of new technology had been limited within the partnerships they were aware of.

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[23] *Collaboration with the Australian Museum: https://www.miragenews.com/australian-museum-launches-first-in-depth-880246/#:~:text=In%20addition%20to%20the%20scientific,to%20learn%20about%20the%20expedition*

[24] *Norfolk Island Central School outreach: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/661d707bd330655b18d537fc80cb87bf/final-reef-health-report-2024.pdf#:~:text=Community%20Outreach%20and%20Engagement%20Activities,Associate%20Professor%20Gaston%20and%20Associate*

[25] *NORFOLK MARINE PARK MULTIMEDIA PROJECT: 2021-09-24-mr-the-norfolk-wave-campaign.pdf*

[26] *Discover Norfolk Island Marine Park (2021): Discover Norfolk Marine Park | Discover Norfolk Island*

[27] *A Delicate Balance – Parks Australia (2024): A Delicate Balance - Parks Australia | Discover Norfolk Island*

Action	Completion status
A4. Establish network advisory committees to ensure users and interested stakeholders have on-going input into the management of Australian Marine Parks **A8. Establish a Temperate East Network Advisory Committee/s or other engagement mechanisms to support and collaborate with the Director in Management**	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

These actions were assessed as partially completed. While the desktop review provided evidence of an advisory committee being established in a timely manner, stakeholder feedback indicated that the committee may not have had the intended input into marine park management.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review found that the TEMPAC was appointed by the Director of National Parks (the Director) in 2019 with 12 members for a period of two years. The membership of the committee was extended for 2 years in 2021, and new members were invited to apply and appointed in 2023. [28]

The TEMPAC has been convened twice annually since 2019, with communiqués published after each meeting to document discussions. In May 2025, a Joint Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committee (AMPAC) meeting was held in Brisbane to facilitate knowledge sharing, networking, and cross-network guidance for the upcoming review phase actions.[29]

Evidence from engagement:

TEMPAC members expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to engage with Parks Australia and receive information about management of the Temperate East Network via the advisory committee. In particular, TEMPAC members commented on the value of in person meetings (including joint meetings with the AMPACs from other network(s) to support robust conversation and effective knowledge sharing.

However, both AMPAC members and Parks Australia staff expressed concerns about the effectiveness of the operation of the current model. More specifically:

- TEMPAC members felt that they had not received adequate information from Parks Australia about specific management activities and outcomes via the TEMPAC process, which had constrained their ability to effectively provide ongoing input into the management of the Temperate East Network. Additionally, TEMPAC members felt that their expertise and input shared via the committee had not had a meaningful impact on marine park management, particularly as they rarely received feedback to “close the loop” in relation to matters discussed in previous meetings. Some also felt that the expertise of AMPAC members could be better utilised via additional opportunities to work with Parks Australia on key issues

[28] *Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/advisory-committees/temperate-east-marine-parks-advisory-committee/*

[29] *Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/advisory-committees/temperate-east-marine-parks-advisory-committee/*

related to the Temperate East Network (including out of session consultations online or in writing).

- Parks Australia staff raised concerns about the high costs associated with running the committees and limited value derived. Parks Australia staff also noted that at times the meetings were poorly attended, which further hindered their ability to seek meaningful advice.

Further information in relation to the operation of AMPACs (including the TEMPAC) over the course of the management plan and key learnings for the future are presented in the '*Overall findings Across Marine Parks'* report.

Action	Completion status
A5. Develop a customer focused approach to tracking the aspirations and concerns of stakeholders in relation to marine parks	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While a formal approach to seeking feedback was developed via the TEMPAC, this was not found to be applicable to the breadth of relevant stakeholders, and only some felt that there were adequate mechanisms in place to track their aspirations and concerns in relation to the Temperate East Network.

Evidence from desktop review:

As discussed in relation to Actions 4 and 8 (above), the TEMPAC was established in 2019 as a means of understanding and tracking the aspirations and concerns of stakeholders in relation to marine parks.[30] However, no other formal mechanisms/ approaches to track the aspirations and concerns of stakeholders who were not TEMPAC members were identified.

Evidence from engagement:

While the establishment of the TEMPAC was the key formal feedback mechanism established during the course of the plan, TEMPAC members felt that there was limited scope for them to raise aspirations and concerns via this mechanism (due to limited time to raise issues during formal meetings). Some also felt that when concerns were raised from TEMPAC members, there was limited feedback to show if and how these concerns had been considered by Parks Australia staff.

Feedback from other stakeholders about this action was mixed. Some stakeholders, particularly Norfolk Island stakeholders and those from commercial or recreational fishing groups, reported ongoing collaborative relationships with Parks Australia that allowed them to provide feedback and receive responsive action or information in return.

[30] *Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/726d1b254d717f114945bbd7b185047b/amp-document-tempac-meeting-two-communique.pdf*

However, many other stakeholders expressed less positive views, reporting limited consultation and insufficient communication, which they felt restricted their ability to raise aspirations or concerns with Parks Australia.

Action	Completion status
A6. Develop information on marine parks to encourage increased awareness and understanding of values and management arrangements (to be evaluated together with Activities 1 and 2 above)	**Completed**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **completed** as the required outputs were delivered in a timely manner.

However, many stakeholders did not feel there was enough information or felt that the information that was available was not being widely disseminated to increase awareness and understanding of the values and management values across the Temperate East Network.

Evidence from desk research:

The desktop review identified a range of online information resources to encourage increased awareness of marine park values, management activities and management arrangements, as outlined in response to A2 (above). In addition to online resources, the desktop review also found evidence of the following communication and education initiatives:

- A Parks Australia presence at Australian Marine Park awareness information stalls at 'Taste of Seafood' festival, held in Bermagui in December 2022 and again in Coffs Harbour in May 2023. [31]
- Restrictions on Kingston Lagoon Signs in Norfolk Marine Park.[32]
- A fact sheet developed in collaboration with NSW Professional Fisher's Association (PFA) to help commercial fishers understand where they can fish within the Temperate East Network.[33]

Evidence from engagement:

In addition to the communication products listed above, stakeholders also noted the following communication activities:

- The Yagel Country Education Kit, which has been used to integrate First Nations knowledge into community engagement activities.
- Information shared via local radio on Norfolk Island in relation to leopard seals.
- The 'Science at Sunset' community engagement program run on Norfolk Island, and
- A colouring competition run in schools on Norfolk Island.

[31] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 – Management report (2022)*: Internal document
[32] *Norfolk Marine Parks, Restrictions on Kingston Lagoon Signs: https://www.norfolkonlinenews.com/article/norfolk-marine-parks-restrictions-on-kingston-lagoon-signs#:~:text=During%20the%20past%20weeks%20I,to%20the%20Kingston%20Lagoon%20areas*
[33] *Commercial fishing in Commonwealth waters – Temperate East Marine Parks: Internal document*

As discussed in relation to Action 2, however, stakeholders held mixed perceptions in relation to the efficacy of information resources in facilitating awareness of marine park values and management activities, largely due to varying levels of awareness among stakeholders about the availability of these resources.

Action	Completion status
A7. Provide infrastructure in and adjacent to the Network, such as signs and marker buoys, to increase understanding of marine park values and rules, particularly at sites that are regularly visited	**Completed**

Evidence

This action was assessed as completed, given the desktop review identified evidence of infrastructure being installed at regularly visited sites, and most stakeholders felt that signage and marker buoys were effective in increasing understanding of marine park values and rules**.**

Evidence from desk research:

The desktop review found evidence of signage about marine parks and rules being updated and installed at strategic locations such as boat ramps and jetties for priority marine parks, namely Cod Grounds, Solitary Islands Marine Park (SIMP), Lord Howe and Norfolk Marine Parks.[34]

Evidence from engagement:

Of stakeholders who were aware of infrastructure in and adjacent to the Temperate East Network, most felt it had been effective in supporting understanding of marine park values and rules, as well as ensuring user safety and enhancing engagement. Specifically, stakeholders noted that:

- Signage tended to be locally tailored and appropriate for the location by balancing the need to provide key information without detracting from the experience of the natural environment.
- Marker buoys were useful for clarifying park zones and boundaries, which supported compliance with regulations amongst recreational fishers.

Action	Completion status
A9. Engage closely with Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities about marine parks and opportunities	**Ongoing**

Evidence

The action was assessed as ongoing as the required outputs have been completed. Most relevant stakeholders indicated that engagement regarding marine parks and associated opportunities was effective.

[34] *TEMPAC Meeting 4 – Year 1 and 2 Progress Report: Internal document*

Evidence from desktop review:

Parks Australia has membership to the Lord Howe Island Marine Park NSW advisory committee (LHIMP) that meets biannually in relation to Australian marine park matters.[35]

Norfolk Marine Park communication are consistent in providing detailed updates on reef health and ongoing research programs. Strategies include public meetings, management advice shared through local newspapers and social media, and maintaining strong relationships with the Norfolk Island community.[36]

TEMPAC meetings document evidence of face-to-face engagement with the users and communities of Lord Howe Island (however, these do not indicate their subject matter, including whether marine parks and opportunities were discussed).[37]

Evidence from engagement:

Norfolk Island stakeholders felt that Parks Australia staff had generally communicated with the community in a respectful and appropriate way, balancing regular communication with recognition of the community's strong desire for independence. Parks Australia was viewed as adopting a more genuinely 'partnered' approach to communication than some other government agencies, with stakeholders noting that this had helped support trust and constructive working relationships.

The Norfolk Island Fishing Association (NIFA) was identified as a particularly important communication partner, given its trusted position within the community and strong interest in the marine environment. NIFA expressed a clear appetite for ongoing collaboration with Parks Australia to support the management and protection of marine parks, while also preserving Norfolk Island's independence and local decision-making role.

However, stakeholders emphasised that the quality of engagement was highly dependent on individual staff members. While there was general satisfaction with current communication and relationships, some stakeholders expressed concern that these could weaken if there were staff changes within Parks Australia. They noted that a new contact may lack the contextual understanding, sensitivity or respect that had been developed through existing relationships.

[35] *Lord Howe Island Marine Park Advisory Committee: https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/advisory-bodies/marine-park-advisory-committees/lord-howe-island-marine-park-advisory-committee*

[36] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment*: *Internal document*

[37] *Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee Meeting 7 Communique: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/f856118fe409fe898d80ec4040c2dc6a/amp-document-Meeting-record---Communique-meeting-7.docx*

5. Findings: Tourism and Visitor Experience Program

This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the Tourism and Visitor Experience Program of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan.

5.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Significant concerns	The **Tourism and Visitor Experience Program** was assessed as having 'significant concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met' or 'unknown'. Of the nine planned actions, three were assessed as 'completed', five were deemed 'partially completed' and one 'not commenced'. Although several actions were only partially completed and not commenced, **the evidence suggests that these efforts were reasonable given the remoteness of many marine parks within the network**.

Strengths and achievements

The evaluation identified some strengths in Parks Australia's approach to supporting the development and implementation of ecotourism initiatives and promotion of high-quality visitor experiences. In particular, for the *'Sharing our Sea Country'* project, stakeholders reported that relationships between Parks Australia and the Ngiyambandigay Wajaarr Aboriginal Corporation (NWAC) extended beyond the project and grant period, highlighting a positive example of First Nations involvement in tourism and park management.

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

Evidence, however, indicated that tourism activities across the Temperate East Marine Parks were generally limited. Contributing factors included the offshore/ deep-sea location of many of the marine parks, the impacts of COVID-19 (i.e. travel restrictions and park closures that delayed activities) and the lack of a formal mechanism to monitor visitor numbers, which hindered the ability to track trends and evaluate outcomes.

Most stakeholders noted that, while the Tourism and Visitor Experience Program was a valuable program in some contexts and networks, it was less relevant in the Temperate East due to these challenges. They emphasised the need for tailored approaches across the network and suggested integrating this program with the Communication, Education, and Awareness Program in future management plans.

Additionally, one stakeholder highlighted the potential for Parks Australia to explore digital tourism initiatives to improve accessibility, enhance engagement and address barriers related to physical access and environmental impact.

5.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O2. High-quality visitor experiences that are appealing, engaging and raise awareness of the natural and cultural values of marine parks	Partially met	Trend getting better

Evidence

This outcome was assessed as **partially met**, with evidence indicating mixed perceptions of outcome effectiveness amongst stakeholders.

Evidence from desktop review:

Self-reported evidence from Parks Australia indicated that the number of licensed tourism operators within the Temperate East Network was currently very low. Most of these marine parks are located outside areas where commercial tourism businesses typically operate, which presents challenges for increasing tourism activities within the network or achieving high quality visitor experiences.[38]

Evidence from engagement:

One stakeholder noted that Parks Australia had made commendable efforts to promote positive visitor experiences and foster curiosity about protected natural areas and ecotourism through the presence of staff on the ground and the use of visitor centres to engage and educate visitors.

Another stakeholder noted that high-quality visitor experiences were typically attributed to the efforts of tourism operators. This stakeholder suggested that Parks Australia could play a more active role in supporting these operators, such as through increased marketing of Parks Australia's role, promoting the availability of grants, and engaging with operators through platforms such as the Tourism Forum.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O3. Increased visitation to marine parks	Unknown	Trend stable

Evidence

Due to mixed evidence and the absence of robust, quantifiable measures for tracking visitation to marine parks, this outcome was assessed as **unknown**.

Evidence from desktop review:

Self-reported evidence from Parks Australia highlighted that most Temperate East Marine Parks are located too far offshore to attract significant visitor numbers, with the exception of Norfolk

[38] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*

Marine Park, which extends to the high-water mark on Norfolk Island but faces logistical access challenges. While Lord Howe Marine Park does have a commercial tourist boat fleet, its size has not increased during the life of the management plan, primarily due to the cap of 440 tourist beds on Lord Howe Island.[39]

Evidence from engagement:

One stakeholder perceived there had been an increase in activity in the marine parks of the Temperate East, outlining they had observed more dive boats and dolphin watch boats passing through the network. However, given no other stakeholders provided feedback pertaining to visitation numbers in the Temperate-East, a reliable assessment of the effectiveness of this outcome cannot be made.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O4. Social and economic benefits from the contribution of marine parks to Australia's visitor economy	Partially met	Trend stable

Evidence

This outcome was assessed as **partially met** based on evidence from the desktop review. No stakeholder input was relevant for assessing this outcome.

Evidence from desktop review:

- A report that details the social, economic and cultural values and benefits of Lord Howe Island.[40]
- Self-reported evidence from Parks Australia which indicates the difficulty in measuring the benefits of marine parks, particularly given their distance offshore. Parks Australia went on further to explain that "[Australian Marine Parks] AMPs offer extremely marginal benefits to tourism operators with rising costs of fuel and vessel access challenges".[41]

[39] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*
[40] *Literature review of social, economic and cultural information for Lord Howel Island Marine Park: https://www.marine.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1562207/Literature-review-of-social,-economic-and-cultural-information-for-Lord-Howe-Island-Marine-Park-2023.PDF*
[41] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*

5.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Tourism and Visitor Experience Program.

Action	Completion status
A10. Develop a sustainable tourism and visitor experience strategy for Australian Marine Parks	Completed
Evidence	
Overall, this action was assessed as **completed in a timely manner**, with the desktop review identifying evidence of the timely development of the '*Australian Marine Parks Tourism Strategy 2021—26*'.[42]	

Action	Completion status
A11. Work with national, state and local tourism authorities and operators to maximise the value of sustainable ecotourism opportunities associated with marine parks	Partially completed or implemented
Evidence	
Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. While the desktop review identified evidence of partnership arrangements and collaboration initiatives to maximise the value of sustainable ecotourism opportunities, these tended to be limited to local tourism authorities and most stakeholders did not feel the value of these experiences had been maximised over the life of the plan. **Evidence from desktop review:** The desktop review found stronger evidence of partnerships with local tourism authorities, with less emphasis on national and state authorities or operators. These outputs were delivered between 2019 and 2025, highlighting the timeliness of this action. The desktop review provided the following evidence of work with national authorities: • An industry briefing with AusTrade and Destination NSW to present the Tourism Strategy in April 2021.[43] The desktop review provided the following evidence of work with state authorities: • A brochure on Elizabeth and Middleton reefs highlighting the natural values and allowable activities in collaboration with NSW Department of Primary Industries.[44]	

[42] *Australian Marine Parks Tourism Strategy 2021-26 (published 2021): Internal document*
[43] *Draft Tourism Strategy presentation deck (2021): Internal document*
[44] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*

- Self-reported evidence of collaboration with Tourism NSW related to Coffs Coast, whereby initial engagement occurred between 2019-2020 to then eventually be ceased due to negative impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism industry.[45]

The desktop review provided the following evidence of work with local authorities:

- NWAC's *'Sharing our Sea Country'* project using OMPG3 funding. This involved working with the Gumbaynnggirr People, who were developing a First Nations-led eco-tourism business in the Coffs Harbour region (Solitary Islands Marine Park) since 2020.[46]
- A brief snorkelling/ reef walking guide for distribution by Norfolk Island Visitor Centre.[47]
- Advertorials/ articles published in '*Discover Norfolk'* Magazine promoting Norfolk Marine Park marine tourism operators and visitor experiences (e.g. reef snorkelling at Emily Bay and kayak tours).[48] [49]

Evidence from engagement:

The few stakeholders who provided comments on this action reported limited perceived increase in the value of sustainable ecotourism experiences over the life of the plan. It was felt by these stakeholders that Parks Australia had placed greater priority on marine park health and science over visitation opportunities. Many stakeholders noted that tourism and visitor experiences were less relevant overall, as tourism activity was limited to a small number of accessible locations such as Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island.

One stakeholder acknowledged Park Australia's efforts to promote sustainable ecotourism but emphasised the lack of incentives (e.g. extended permits for accredited operators) to encourage more tourism businesses to operate in the network. This was felt to constrain the sustainability of ecotourism across the network.

Action	Completion status
A12. Develop a commercial tourism authorisation system to encourage best-practice and eco-accredited businesses operating in Australian Marine Parks	**Completed**
Evidence	
Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**, with the desktop review identifying evidence of an online permit and licensing application system that enabled authorisation for commercial tourism activities, recreational fishing (where required near Norfolk Island), and other activities.[50]	

[45] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*
[46] *Ngurraa Ngiyambandigay gaagal final report 22-25: Internal document*
[47] *Temperate East Internal self-assessment: Internal document*
[48] *Discover Norfolk Island Marine Park (2019):* Discover Norfolk Marine Park | Discover Norfolk Island
[49] *A Delicate Balance – Parks Australia (2024):* A Delicate Balance - Parks Australia | Discover Norfolk Island
[50] *Australian Marine Parks - Permit and licence applications (publication date unknown):* Australian Marine Parks - Permit and licence applications | Online Services - Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Action	Completion status
A13. Work with Tourism Australia and state and regional tourism authorities and the fishing industry to market and promote Australian Marine Parks, including opportunities to promote locally and sustainably caught seafood	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. Desktop evidence showed efforts to market and promote Australian Marine Parks with tourism authorities and the fishing industry; however, these efforts were lacking in consistency, occurring primarily within the first three years of the plan and varying across the Temperate East Marine Park Network. Most stakeholders also reported that they either did not feel that marketing assets had been effective, or were unsure if they had been.

Evidence from desktop review:

- A fact sheet developed in collaboration with NSW Professional Fisher's Association (PFA) to help commercial fishers understand where they can fish within the Temperate East Network.[51]
- Annual advertorials/ article published in '*Discover Norfolk*' Magazine in 2021 promoting Norfolk Marine Park marine tourism operators and visitor experiences, including highlighting the importance of protection for "both conservation and providing a sustainable supply of local, fresh seafood".[52]
- Sustainability certification for Australian caught tuna (achieved in 2020), including across the Temperate East Network (funded by OMPG1). This certification aims to help raise awareness of Australia's fisheries management, highlight how these fisheries depend on healthy marine ecosystems, and reinforce the role everyone can play in supporting a thriving ocean economy.[53]

Evidence of engagement:

Most stakeholders were either uncertain about the completion of this action or felt that the marketing assets were ineffective in promoting Australian Marine Parks. One stakeholder specifically noted limited awareness of a coordinated marketing campaign and suggested that promoting the Temperate East Network, particularly regarding local and sustainably caught seafood, was outside Parks Australia's role and more appropriately the responsibility of operators or Tourism Australia.

[51] *Commercial fishing in Commonwealth waters – Temperate East Marine Parks (publication date unknown)*: Internal document
[52] *Discover Norfolk Island Marine Park (2021)*: Discover Norfolk Marine Park | Discover Norfolk Island
[53] *Our Marine Park Grants Round One Projects*: Our Marine Park Grants Round One

Action	Completion status
A14. Monitor visitor trends and levels of satisfaction with marine park experiences and products	**Not commenced**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **not commenced**, as desktop evidence indicated no implementation of monitoring of visitor trends or levels of satisfaction with marine park experiences and products. However, the evaluation identified that this may be due to the network's remoteness and the limited number of licensed tourism operators and opportunities.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review provided the following evidence for the justification of why this action had not been commenced. Findings highlighted how this may have been due to the network's remoteness (i.e. offshore/ deep sea marine parks) and the limited number of licensed tourism operators and opportunities.

- A desktop analysis commissioned by Parks Australia in 2021 to identify current and potential users of the Temperate East Network found:[54]
    - There were nine commercial tourism operators in the Temperate East Network that hold a licence with Parks Australia.
    - Direct use of the Temperate East Network by commercial tourism operators was very low. However, there may be a higher number of potential users who are not currently licensed, possibly due to the impacts of COVID-19 on the sector or low levels of use, resulting in occasional ad hoc permit requests.
- Self-reported evidence that monitoring visitor trends and levels of satisfaction were not relevant due to limited tourism activity across the Temperate East Network.[55]
- Challenges were noted in determining whether certain marine tourism activities occurred within Temperate East Marine Parks or in nearby waters.[56]

[54] *TEMPAC Meeting 7 – Management report (2021): Internal document*
[55] *TE Network Internal Self Assessment: Internal document*
[56] *TEMPAC Meeting 7 – Management report (2021): Internal document*

Action	Completion status
A15. Promote culturally sensitive tourism by encouraging tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**.

The desktop review found that the main mechanism for encouraging tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners was a prompt that appeared on the webpage when submitting an application via the authorisations and assessments process. A few stakeholders also reported being encouraged by Parks Australia to liaise with Traditional Owners. No Traditional Owners nor First Nations tourism operators provided feedback pertaining to this action.

Action	Completion status
A16. Work with tourism operators and First Nations peoples to recognise and promote cultural values and cultural tourism opportunities	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. The desktop review identified one example of relevant collaboration between Parks Australia and a First Nations organisation to promote cultural tourism opportunities. One First Nations partner also felt that Parks Australia had taken appropriate and effective steps to recognise cultural tourism opportunities.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review found that NWAC has been leading the *'Sharing our Sea Country'* project, supported by round 3 OMPG funding. Since 2020, NWAC has been working with Gumbaynnggirr peoples to develop a First Nations-led eco-tourism business in the Coffs Harbour region, within the Solitary Islands Marine Park.[57]

Evidence from engagement:

One First Nations partner outlined that they had worked with Parks Australia and had highly positive experiences. They reported they had been adequately supported through the grant process and establishment of their project, and were regularly advised of other potential opportunities for training and capacity building.

This partner acknowledged that while the support they had received from Parks Australia had been highly positive, this was largely due to the in-depth, one-to-one relationships they had developed with a Parks Australia staff member. They highlighted that this level of personalised support was not always consistent across the network for other First Nations operators or peoples.

[57] *Ngurraa Ngiyambandigay gaagal final report 22-25: Internal document*

Action	Completion status
A17. Promote visitor experiences that foster curiosity and appreciation of natural and heritage values in the Network, for example nature watching, diving or snorkelling at the Norfolk, Solitary Islands, Cod Grounds and Lord Howe Marine Parks	**Completed**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**. A range of desktop evidence was identified in relation to the promotion of visitor experiences to foster curiosity and appreciation which was corroborated by stakeholders.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Visitor experiences being promoted on the Parks Australia website under the 'Explore' section of each corresponding marine park.[58]
- Information of the '*Norfolk Marine Park no-take determination*' provided to visitors through signage, fact sheets in accommodation and an article in the '*Discover Norfolk'* magazine.[59] [60]
- Norfolk Island Regional Council multi-media campaign, funded by OMPG2, to educate and empower responsible care and use of the Norfolk Marine Park for both local community and visitors.[61]
- Advertorials/ articles published in '*Discover Norfolk'* magazine promoting Norfolk Marine Park marine tourism operators and visitor experiences (e.g. reef snorkelling at Emily Bay and kayak tours).[62] [63]
- AMP awareness information stall at *'Taste of Seafood'* festival, whereby Parks representatives from AMP Compliance and Temperate East Regional Team attended the festival at Coffs Harbour in May 2023 (and Bermagui in December 2022).[64]
- Information stall at the Bondi *'Ocean Lovers'* festival in February 2025, whereby Temperate East Parks Australia representatives sponsored a booth at the festival that "attracted hundreds of visitors".[65]

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, stakeholders reported that assets managed by Parks Australia were well maintained on a day-to-day basis. Further feedback pertaining to this action was limited.

[58] *Temperate East Marine Parks Network website: Temperate East Marine Parks Network | Australian Marine Parks | Parks Australia*
[59] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 – Management report (2022): Internal document*
[60] *A Delicate Balance – Parks Australia (2024): A Delicate Balance - Parks Australia | Discover Norfolk Island*
[61] *NORFOLK MARINE PARK MULTIMEDIA PROJECT: 2021-09-24-mr-the-norfolk-wave-campaign.pdf*
[62] *Discover Norfolk Island Marine Park (2021): Discover Norfolk Marine Park | Discover Norfolk Island*
[63] *A Delicate Balance – Parks Australia (2024): A Delicate Balance - Parks Australia | Discover Norfolk Island*
[64] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 – Management report (2022): Internal document*
[65] *TEMPAC Meeting 13 – Management report (2025): Internal document*

Action	Completion status
A18. Work with other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies, and the tourism industry to support tourism initiatives, events and attractions that promote visitor experiences in marine parks	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. The desktop review identified an increase in initiatives, events and attractions that promote visitor experiences in the Temperate East Network. However, stakeholders expressed mixed perceptions regarding the effectiveness of support provided for these efforts.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Parks Australia representatives from the AMP Compliance and Temperate East Management teams attended the *'Taste of Seafood'* festival in Bermagui in December 2022 and in Coffs Harbour in May 2023.[66]
- Information stall at the Bondi *'Ocean Lovers'* festival in February 2025, whereby Temperate East Parks Australia representatives sponsored a booth at the festival and "attracted hundreds of visitors".[67]
- Self-reported evidence of attending the Sydney International Boat Show (SIBS) on 2 August 2019 to scope out the potential benefits for having an AMP stall in the future.[68]

Evidence from engagement:

The evaluation found mixed perceptions amongst stakeholders of this action. One stakeholder noted that Parks Australia provided appropriate support for their tourism activities and described the partnership as positive and collaborative. However, it was felt that this support was largely reactive, occurring only when specifically requested or prompted, rather than being proactive in anticipating or addressing needs.

[66] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 – Management report: Internal document*
[67] *TEMPAC Meeting 13 – Management report (2025): Internal document*
[68] *TEMPAC Meeting 4 paper – Year 1 and 2 Progress Report: Internal document*

6. Findings: Indigenous Engagement Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of Indigenous **Engagement Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Management Plan.*

6.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Significant concerns	The **Indigenous Engagement Program** was assessed as having 'significant concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the eight planned actions, one was assessed as 'completed', six were deemed 'partially completed', and one 'not commenced'. It is important to note that feedback from First Nations partners for this program was limited, with only three participating in the stakeholder engagement phase of the evaluation specifically in relation to the Temperate East. Nevertheless, opportunities were identified to improve the program's effectiveness, particularly by strengthening co-management approaches that embed early engagement with First Nations communities and ensuring more appropriate and adequate engagement.

Strengths and achievements

The evaluation identified a range of efforts by Parks Australia to engage First Nations peoples in a culturally responsive way, particularly in relation to providing information to First Nations peoples about marine park management. This was exemplified through initiatives that provided training and qualifications for First Nations Rangers and through the development of educational resources, such as those disseminated as part of the South Coast Education Program, to teach young First Nations peoples about marine park management.

The desktop review also highlighted efforts to enhance understanding of Traditional Knowledge, map Cultural Values, and manage significant sites, evidenced by projects such as that with the Ngiyambandigay Wajaarr Aboriginal Corporation (NWAC).

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

Despite demonstrated strengths in collaboration with Traditional Owners, Parks Australia staff reported difficulties in initially identifying and establishing connections with appropriate First Nations community members. These difficulties constrained the expansion of collaborative projects and partnerships with Traditional Owners and other First Nations organisations. The desktop review supported these findings, with actions A22 and A26 highlighting a limited number of collaborative initiatives.

Additionally, First Nations partners reported a range of negative feedback in relation to the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Indigenous Engagement Program, citing issues in relation to:

- The "lack-lustre" engagement efforts, including concerns about the absence of proper co-management approaches.
- Engagement efforts that were not inclusive of all relevant First Nations partners or appropriate Traditional Owners with the necessary Cultural and Sea Country knowledge, leaving some feeling

excluded from important management decisions related to their heritage, Totems and/ or cultural responsibilities.

- The siloed nature of the program from the other programs (i.e. in the management plan).

Overall, this meant that many First Nations peoples felt that their contribution, engagement and collaboration in the Temperate East Network was not appropriately valued.

Findings highlighted the need for more structured and consistent engagement (i.e. formally recognising governance structures and appropriate partners/ Traditional Owners), formalised partnerships and co-management approaches, and greater integration of First Nations perspectives in marine park management.

6.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O5. Marine Park management contributes to social, cultural and economic benefits for Traditional Owners	Partially met	Trend getting better
Evidence		

This outcome was assessed as **partially met,** based on desktop evidence indicating that progress has been made towards meeting the outcome as outlined in the plan.

Evidence from desktop review:

The review highlighted evidence of training and development opportunities (as outlined further in A21). It also identified broader benefits associated with marine protected areas (MPAs), including:

- The cultural traditions, practices, and knowledges related to resource use, access to marine resources and cultural heritage, and protection of cultural or spiritual places and landscapes. The review also noted that MPAs were more likely to attract visitors due to their natural beauty and clean water, boosting local income through tourism and seafood industries.
- Other benefits such as continuation of cultural traditions, community and individual wellbeing and employment opportunities were identified when First Nations peoples were connected with marine areas.

Evidence from consultations with Traditional Owners:

No explicit feedback was provided by Traditional Owners regarding this outcome. However, as noted earlier, some First Nations partners and Traditional Owners expressed concerns about not feeling adequately engaged in marine park management and decision-making, which may have limited the potential benefits for these groups.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O6. Increase understanding of Traditional Knowledge, map cultural values and manage significant sites	Partially met	Trend getting better
Evidence		

This outcome was assessed as **partially met**. While there was sound desktop evidence, limited feedback from First Nations partners made it challenging to reliably assess the effectiveness of this outcome.

Evidence from desktop review:

- A collaborative project was conducted with artists from the Worimi Peoples, Parks Australia and the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) to develop First Nations traditional artworks, interpretative stories and a brochure. These artworks and interpretative stories have been used to provide an understanding of the values and connections to marine parks and the importance of Sea Country for the Worimi peoples.[69]
- A round 3 Our Marine Park Grant (OMPG) project by NWAC included the development of a traditional marine based seasonal calendar to increase understanding of Traditional Knowledge and Cultural Values.[70]
- An Aboriginal Liaison Officer from NSW DPI shared their experiences and story with Parks Australia staff, a range of government partners in Hobart and the Temperate East Marine Park Advisory Committee (TEMPAC). This engagement facilitated two-way knowledge sharing on marine park management.[71]

Evidence from engagement:

While no First Nations partners explicitly provided feedback on this outcome, one Traditional Owner expressed concern that studies conducted with First Nations communities, including those referenced in the desktop review, were sometimes undertaken "behind closed doors" or without the involvement of the most appropriate Elders, Traditional Owners, or Cultural Knowledge Holders. This feedback highlights potential issues with the cultural appropriateness of such projects and suggests that they may not always effectively empower First Nations peoples. In particular, the lack of inclusive engagement was seen as a barrier to achieving the intended outcome of increasing understanding of Traditional Knowledge, mapping Cultural Values, and managing Significant Sites.

[69] *TEMPAC Meeting 2 paper: Internal document*
[70] *Our Marine Park Grants Round 3 projects: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/34e05cdfb4b82c5919f6d4d7779b57b0/our-marine-park-grants-round-three-projects-v2.pdf*
[71] *TEMPAC Meeting 4 paper: Internal document*

6.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Indigenous Engagement Program.

Action	Completion status
A19. Develop an Australian Marine parks First Nations engagement and cultural heritage strategy, to improve understanding of cultural heritage, link management with Sea Country plans and maximise employment and enterprise opportunities for Traditional Owners	**Not commenced**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **not commenced** as an Indigenous Engagement and Cultural Heritage Strategy has not been established.

While some Parks Australia staff indicated that this had not been pursued due to the diverse and specific requirements of First Nations cultures and communities, some First Nations partners suggested that such a strategy could address current shortcomings in engagement activities. Specifically, First Nations participants recommended that the strategy include a requirement to undertake clear and comprehensive mapping of Traditional Owners for the different marine parks (potentially via documentation of existing Commonwealth Native Title Determinations) to ensure the adequate inclusion and engagement of relevant peoples. Ensuring understanding of Traditional Ownership remained contemporary was also found to be important, as Native Title claims could change over the course of the management plan. Additionally, First Nations participants emphasised that the strategy should mandate the involvement of relevant Traditional Owner groups from the early stages of projects and provide a framework to better implement co-management practices.

Beyond engaging with Traditional Owners, First Nations participants also felt that it would be important to provide more informal avenues for engagement with First Nations community members who may not be officially recognised as Traditional Owners but who sought to maintain connections to Sea Country and practise Culture.

Action	Completion status
A20. Develop agreements to support First Nations Ranger programs to deliver management in marine parks	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. The desktop review identified one example of an agreement to support a First Nations Ranger program to deliver marine park management. There were also mixed perceptions from First Nations partners about whether First Nations representation in the management of marine parks had increased.

Evidence from desktop review:

NWAC's *'Sharing our Sea Country project'*, funded through OMPG3, has been supporting the Gumbaynggirr People in the development of a First Nations-led eco-tourism enterprise in the Coffs Harbour region, within the Solitary Islands Marine Park, since 2020.[72]

Evidence from engagement:

Feedback from First Nations partners in relation to this action was mixed. One partner felt that there was a range of newly established Sea Country Ranger programs and noticed that more people were getting involved to care for Sea Country, citing perceptions of an increased interest from First Nations peoples in being "part of program development and data collection".

However, other stakeholders noted that a significant portion of the Temperate East continued to be managed by non-Indigenous people, with limited agreements in place. They highlighted that, when agreements were established, they often amounted to a tokenistic "splash of money" directed towards cultural practices. These agreements were seen as insufficient to support marine park management in a more meaningful and collaborative manner, such as fostering genuine co-management and empowering Indigenous stewardship.

Action	Completion status
A21. Provide information to First Nations peoples about marine park management	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While assessing timeliness was challenging due to unknown dates for some outputs, available evidence suggests they were launched during the middle stages of the plan. However, feedback from First Nations partners indicates that information was not always shared in an appropriate manner.

Evidence from desktop review:

The review found that information provided to First Nations peoples about marine park management was primarily delivered through training and provision of formal qualifications. Evidence included:

- The OMPG3 Grant to NWAC to support development of their tourism business (2022). This included provision of Marine Mammal Observer Training to 20 of NWAC's Sea Country Rangers.[73]
- When meeting with Yaegl, Worimi and Gumbaynggirr People, Parks Australia provided factsheets and individual marine park maps with relevant boundaries (e.g. Local Government Areas, Native Title and Indigenous Protection Areas [IPAs]). Parks Australia also provided a 2-day training program to NWAC Sea Country Rangers.[74]

[72] *Our Marine Park Grant Round 3: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/34e05cdfb4b82c5919f6d4d7779b57b0/our-marine-park-grants-round-three-projects-v2.pdf*
[73] *Temperate East Management Meeting 11 report: Internal document.*
[74] *Temperate East Self Assessment: Internal document.*

- Information via a Certificate II in Tourism, which was provided to 13 Local Aboriginal Land Council Rangers and south coast native title claimants who helped deliver the South Coast Sea Country Education Program.[75]

The desktop review also identified that Parks Australia and representatives from the Tasmanian Education Department conducted a week-long knowledge and cultural exchange focused on the Sea Country Education Program activities.[76]

Evidence from engagement:

A few stakeholders highlighted concerns regarding the concentration of knowledge sharing within the TEMPAC. Specifically, a First Nations partner noted that information about marine park management was perceived to be shared primarily among those directly interacting with Parks Australia (such as the TEMPAC), with limited dissemination to the broader community, including First Nations peoples and partners. This was particularly evident given there were no current First Nations members on the TEMPAC.

Another First Nations partner highlighted that Parks Australia's approach to knowledge sharing, including the language used to describe the action itself, did not support a mutual exchange of information. They emphasised that such an exchange is essential for effective collaboration with First Nations partners in marine park management.

A non-Indigenous stakeholder also noted that when knowledge sharing did occur, it was conducted inappropriately. For example, Parks Australia provided funding to a private contractor to collect stories from Aboriginal communities, which were then published online. This process bypassed direct engagement with the communities and prematurely exposed children and families to cultural stories that were intended to be shared later and within the family context.

Action	Completion status
A22. Collaborate with Traditional Owners and relevant partners such as the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council on implementing the First Nations Engagement Program, including supporting First Nations groups to participate in marine park management	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. Desktop evidence showed some examples of Parks Australia collaborating with First Nations partners in a timely manner. However, no evidence was found of collaboration with the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council. Feedback from First Nations partners also indicated that efforts from Parks Australia to implement the First Nations program had mixed effectiveness.

Evidence from desktop review:

The review identified only a few examples of collaborative efforts between First Nations groups and Parks Australia to participate in marine park management, occurring between 2022 and 2024. Efforts included:

[75] *TEMPAC Meeting 4 paper. Internal document – date the South Coast Sea Education Program was launched is unknown*
[76] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 paper: Internal document*

Collaboration with Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl Rangers as well as the NSW government to map and characterise seabed features and benthic habitats of the Solitary Islands Marine Park.[77]

A collaborative project funded through the OMPG grants to assess the effects of climate change and marine heatwaves on deep reef ecosystems across the Temperate East Marine Parks Network. Specifically, this included collaboration between the Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl peoples (Solitary Islands), Worimi Peoples (Hunter) and Lorde Howe Island peoples as well as the University of Tasmania.[78]

Plans made for CSIRO's RV Investigator voyage in June 2024 to explore deep sea canyons crossing the continental shelf within the Central Eastern Marine Park and another canyon outside the park's boundaries. This included involvement from Sea Country Rangers in the voyage and information sessions for Sea Country Ranger groups to share details about the activities of CSIRO and Parks Australia. [79] [80]

Evidence from engagement:

The evaluation found mixed perceptions amongst First Nations partners of the appropriateness and effectiveness of Parks Australia's efforts to implement the Indigenous Engagement Program. One First Nations partner had relatively positive experiences, primarily due to their relationship and one-on-one support from a Parks Australia staff member. As outlined above (see A16), the partner reported receiving support to complete the grant application, establish their project, and identify potential new project opportunities.

However, other First Nations partners reported negative experiences, describing collaboration and engagement as limited and, when it did occur, being inappropriate or not undertaken in a culturally responsive way. For example, they noted instances where individuals without cultural knowledge were engaged to conduct marine park management, undermining the integrity of the process. These partners viewed this as a failure to leverage thousands of years of marine park management knowledge and skills held by their communities. They emphasised that meaningful collaboration by Parks Australia required approaches such as ongoing engagement, a respectful governance approach and greater representation on advisory committees.

Action	Completion status
A23. Implement Cultural Awareness training for Parks Australia staff in association with Traditional Owners	**Completed**
Evidence	
This action was assessed as **completed**, based on documentary evidence confirming that Cultural Awareness training had taken place. However, while no explicit feedback was provided by Traditional Owners regarding this action, other findings across the program suggest that the	

[77] *Mapping and characterizing seabed features and benthic habitats of the Solitary Islands Marine Park in the Temperature East Marine Parks Network: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/734c97e56886d93a15c611222d227b33/amp-simp2024-report.pdf*

[78] *Our Marine Park Grants Round Four Projects: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/e1332c53cb5a0ea7099e14e8d6a616f0/amp-round-4-grant-recipients.pdf*

[79] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 paper: Internal document.*

[80] *RV Investigator Voyage IN2024_V04 End of Voyage (EOV) Archive: https://data.csiro.au/collection/csiro:63321*

training could be enhanced by being more specific and better tailored to the unique cultural contexts and needs of the respective First Nations communities involved.

Evidence from desktop review:

- All Parks Australia staff are required to complete cultural awareness training in accordance with annual requirements set by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.[81]
- Parks Australia staff based in Hobart completed cultural awareness training on Country at Risdon Cove with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation.[82]

Action	Completion status
A24. Establish protocols for researchers working with Parks Australia to guide engagement with Traditional Owners	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. Evidence suggests that protocols for researchers working with Parks Australia have been established to some extent, but further progress is needed to fully implement this action.

Desktop review:

The desktop review identified the following actions:

- Parks Australia collaborated with the Biodiversity and Conservation Division and the Heritage, Reef and Ocean Division at the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW), as well as Terri Janke and Company to develop a principle-based Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) protocol, toolkits and templates and training for staff.[83]
- A Land and Sea Country Mapping Tool was developed to support consultations with Sea Country Managers. This tool collates data layers, relating to land and sea management, native title, cultural heritage, Indigenous Ranger groups, IPAS, land councils and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.[84]
- Parks Australia attended and presented at a Sydney-led workshop supported by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority in November 2023. This workshop focused on options to advance Indigenous engagement in Commonwealth fisheries. Parks Australia presented their approach to partnering with First Nations peoples across the marine parks.[85]

[81] *Progress reports Years 1 & 2: Internal document*
[82] *Foundational Phase Review Report: Internal document*
[83] *TEMPAC Meeting 7 report (2021) – date ICIP protocols were developed are unknown. Internal document*
[84] *Ibid.*
[85] *TEMPAC Meeting 10 report (2023): Internal document*

Action	Completion status
A25. Identify opportunities and mechanisms to engage Traditional Owners including through coastal Local Aboriginal Land Councils, established under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 in the management of marine parks	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. The review found some desktop evidence of delivery of partnerships in a timely manner. However, feedback from a few First Nations partners indicated that efforts made by Parks Australia were either not culturally responsive or insufficient to meet their expectations.

Evidence from desktop review:

- A TEMPAC member attended the Buluunggal (mullet) festival at Gumbaynggir Country Nambucca Heads on 10 May 2025.[86]
- On Country consultations were conducted with Worimi and Yaegl Peoples to appropriately implement the Sea Country Education Project.[87]
- The '*Indigenous Engagement Principles'* were developed in collaboration with First Nations representatives to support engagement of Traditional Owners in the management of all AMPs, including the Temperate East Marine Park Network.[88]
- There was consultation conducted with First Nations representative bodies regarding a draft science strategy for Australian Marine Parks. Additionally, an outline for a work program to develop a '*Sea Country Management Framework*', along with associated guidelines and policies.[89]
- Parks Australia participated and presented at a two-day workshop led by the University of Technology Sydney (2023), which explored options to enhance First Nations engagement in Commonwealth fisheries. Supported by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, and funded by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, the workshop focused on national engagement strategies and key principles to guide them.[90]
- The Australian Marine Science Association (AMSA) held a conference on Yugambeh Country on the Gold Coast from 2–7 July 2023. The conference focused on the theme of 'Science in Sea Country'.[91] Parks Australia staff collaborated with Traditional Owners to present at the conference, highlighting the value of co-design and place-based management approaches with First Nations peoples. The conference provided a platform for building connections, sharing knowledge, fostering inspiration, and encouraging collaboration between First Nations and western scientists.

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[86] *TEMPAC Meeting 11 paper: Internal document*
[87] *Temperate East Communique meeting 9: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/1acda7ad7df74202202873e5f1241b53/temp-communique-meeting-9.pdf*
[88] *Indigenous engagement principles: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/indigenous-engagement-program/indigenous-engagement-principles/*
[89] *TEMPAC Meeting 7 Parks Management Report: Internal document*
[90] *Six month management report: Internal document*
[91] *AMSA Conference 2023 – Science in Sea Country webpage: https://www.amsa.asn.au/amsa-home/amsa-annual-conferences/2023-gold-coast/*

- Parks Australia sponsored the Australian Sea Country Conference, which was conducted between 24–26 September 2024 on Larrakia Country. The conference enabled connection and knowledge sharing between Traditional Owners, Parks Australia and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water about marine park management.[92]
- While relevant for all networks and discussed in relation to actions above, OMPGs provided funding to support opportunities and mechanisms to engage First Nations communities in management of the Temperate East Network.[93]

Evidence from engagement:

One stakeholder highlighted that grant programs, such as the OMPGs, provide valuable opportunities to support First Nations involvement in marine park management. For instance, these grants facilitated the participation of Rangers in mapping the sea floor aboard the CSIRO Investigator, ensuring their active engagement in management and data collection processes.

However, other First Nations partner participants felt there were inadequate opportunities to engage in marine park management. Most First Nations partners emphasised that current engagement approaches by Parks Australia were insufficient for meaningful engagement. Stakeholders instead called for Parks Australia to adopt a co-management approach that ensured ongoing collaboration, accountability, and the return of updates and outcomes to communities after decisions were made and implemented.

These partners also identified additional short- medium- and long-term opportunities to redevelop engagement as part of the '*Unbroken Whispers - The Ripples Connecting Sea-Kin*' project, including:

- Developing internationally recognised Indigenous relational governance models for marine parks
- Beginning Cultural Indicator Framework development
- Establishing whale sanctuaries as spaces for education
- Establishing long-term acoustic and cultural observation programs
- Supporting Indigenous-led documentary and story sharing projects connected to Sea Country monitoring
- Conducting a process of truth-telling to educate the wider Australian public about First Nations peoples' connections to Sea Country and to formally recognise their rights, including the impacts of knowledge and resource extraction and the need to share the benefits of other projects, and
- Operationalising Sea Country Labs as permanent marine stewardship infrastructure.

Youth engagement and intergenerational stewardship were also highlighted as critical priorities, with calls to significantly increase First Nations employment in Sea Country management to reflect their cultural connection and leadership.

[92] *TEMPAC Meeting 11 paper: Internal document*
[93] *Our Marine Park Grants: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/our-marine-parks-grants/*

Action	Completion status
A26. Partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups to manage Sea Country in marine parks	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While some desktop evidence was identified to indicate partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups to manage Sea Country, a few stakeholders and First Nations partners suggested that these efforts by Parks Australia were not always culturally appropriate or sufficiently inclusive.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Partnerships between Parks Australia and various Traditional Owners/ First Nations groups have been established under OMPGs. This was evidenced by collaboration in project delivery of marine park management projects. For example, partnerships between the Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl peoples (Solitary Islands), Worimi Peoples (Hunter) and Lorde Howe Island peoples with the University of Tasmania for the conduct of the project '*Assessing the effects of climate change and marine heatwaves on deep reef ecosystems across the Temperature East Marine Parks Network*'.[94]
- While not a formal partnership, a Parks Australia staff member participated in the Governance committee of the NWAC's proposed IPA in Solitary Islands Marine Park (SIMP). This member is responsible for providing assistance with the proposed Sea Country planning on the North Coast.[95]

Evidence from engagement:

The evaluation revealed mixed perceptions among First Nations partners regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of Parks Australia's efforts to partner with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups in managing Sea Country within marine parks. While one First Nations partner reported relatively positive experiences, others expressed dissatisfaction, stating that Parks Australia's efforts were neither adequate nor culturally appropriate.

In particular, a TEMPAC member highlighted the success of First Nations Ranger programs in the North Network, where First Nations groups were actively involved in projects and engaged as the Commonwealth's first point of reference. They noted that this approach was lacking in the Temperate East Network. Similarly, another First Nations partner emphasised a disconnect and a lack of understanding by Parks Australia regarding the cultural significance of Sea Country and the role of Aboriginal peoples in its management. They further stressed that providing funding alone was insufficient to address this action, instead highlighting the need for more meaningful and culturally responsive engagement.

[94] *The University of Tasmania OMPG3 Milestone report:* Internal document
[95] *Temperate East self-assessment: Internal document*

7. Findings: Marine Science Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the M**arine Science Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan.*

7.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Good with some concerns	The **Marine Science Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcomes of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the eleven planned actions, three were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing' and eight 'partially completed'. The evaluation identified significant improvements over the life of the plan, particularly in the development of baseline ecological datasets and enhanced collaboration between Parks Australia and other stakeholders to strengthen marine park management.

Strengths and achievements

The Temperate East Network demonstrated significant achievements in enhancing understanding of its ecological values, supported by substantial data on ecological baselines. Parks Australia staff also expressed positive views on the progress made with the resources available, highlighting the value of funding through the National Environmental Science Program (NESP), which centralised survey data and provided a single, accessible source of information.

Additionally, the evaluation found considerable progress in fostering collaboration between Parks Australia and the science community, other government agencies, and marine park users. This collaboration was recognised as a key factor in enhancing marine park management.

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

Despite this, a number of limiting factors were identified. Desktop evidence revealed a lack of socio-economic baseline data and limited understanding from stakeholders on how baseline data was applied more generally to inform decision-making in marine park management. Existing data was primarily ecologically focused, leaving gaps in understanding of the broader social and economic dimensions of the Temperate East Network's values and pressures.

Issues with knowledge brokering were also highlighted, with the evaluation revealing limited awareness among most stakeholders of the NESP and uncertainty about where to locate available data on the progress and outcomes of projects undertaken and monitoring activities across the network. This lack of awareness was particularly evident among stakeholders with less direct contact with Parks Australia but was also noted by some members of the Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC). Furthermore, some stakeholders reported limited understanding of available grants and related activities, which hindered marine science engagement and collaboration.

There was also a recognised need to continue and expand monitoring efforts, particularly in relation to invasive species, social and economic uses and their benefits, and the condition of important habitats and their vulnerability to climate change. Enhanced monitoring in these areas was seen as critical to addressing gaps in understanding and supporting more effective marine park management.

7.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O7. Increase understanding of marine park values, pressures and adequacy of responses	Partially met	Trend getting better

Evidence

The evaluation determined that this outcome was **partially met**. This assessment was based on the development of baseline data, identified through the desktop review. However, stakeholder feedback on the extent to which understanding of marine park values, pressures, and the adequacy of responses had increased was mixed.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review evidenced multiple efforts to Increase understanding of marine park values and pressures, detailed below in the evidence for A27.

These efforts, however, were largely restricted to the establishment of baseline datasets. Without longitudinal data on changes relating to marine park values over the course of the plan, a robust assessment of the adequacy of management responses was not possible.

Furthermore, the translation of these efforts into increased understanding of marine park values, pressures and the adequacy of responses amongst marine park users and interest groups has not been robustly surveyed.

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, stakeholders expressed uncertainty about how to effectively measure people's understanding of marine park values, pressures, and the adequacy of responses (as outlined in A21).

Despite this, some stakeholders reported positive progress, particularly those involved in Our Marine Park Grants (OMPG) projects and baseline mapping activities. These stakeholders cited examples such as improved awareness of threats, marine park values, and the future of marine park management (e.g. for recreational fishers on Norfolk Island), which they attributed to outreach efforts by Parks Australia.

However, other stakeholders felt that more work was needed to better educate the broader community across the Temperate East Network on these issues. One stakeholder observed, based on personal experience, that there had been no significant increase in understanding of the Temperate East Network. They added that people tended to be more engaged in nearshore or coastal marine parks compared to offshore or deep-sea marine parks. Another stakeholder specifically noted that recreational and commercial fishers only gained clarity on where fishing was permitted or prohibited through Parks Australia's promotion of zoning. This highlights the need for further efforts to improve understanding of marine park management and its responses to pressures.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O8. Improve understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values	Partially met	Trend stable

Evidence

This outcome was assess as **partially met**. While there was no desktop evidence identified pertaining to this outcome, a few stakeholders who participated in the research reported an improved understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values.

Evidence from engagement:

Some stakeholders reported an increase in understanding of marine park management within the Temperate East Network, citing that this was largely due to considerable outreach and engagement by Parks Australia. Other stakeholders provided limited feedback pertaining to this outcome.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O9. Informed decision-making and improved evidence-based decisions	Partially met	Trend getting better

Evidence

The evaluation found that this outcome was **partially met**. This assessment was based on feedback from a few stakeholders who reported instances of informed decision-making and improved evidence-based decisions.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholder evidence related to this outcome was limited. However, a few stakeholders who provided feedback acknowledged that Parks Australia had made efforts to invest in scientific data to support informed decision-making. One stakeholder noted that Parks Australia appeared to be "after as much information as they could get hold of and data to support what they were doing."

Despite this, one stakeholder highlighted challenges in assessing how effectively the collected data was being utilised, noting that its impact depended on how it was received and acted upon. Additionally, Parks Australia stakeholders emphasised that their ability to make evidence-based decisions was constrained by limited and short-term budget cycles, which restricted their capacity for longer-term planning and implementation.

7.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Marine Science Program.

Action	Completion status
A27. Establish ecological, social and economic baselines to support evidence-based decision-making and adaptive management	Ongoing

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **ongoing**. Considerable documentary evidence of ecological baselines being established was identified – and while there was less evidence from both the desktop review and stakeholder engagement of the establishment of social and economic baselines, these were found to have been partially implemented, with indications that further activities are planned for the remainder of the management plan period.

Evidence from desktop review:

- The desktop review identified considerable progress in the establishment of ecological baselines for seven of eight marine parks in the Temperate East Network. These datasets were delivered in a timely manner, with more than half being delivered in the first four years of the management plan. More specifically, the following evidence was identified to demonstrate the establishment of ecological baseline data sets:
    - A bathymetry survey of Gifford Marine Park undertaken by AODN (2026).[96]
    - A seafloor mapping initiative undertaken by Deakin University and iXblue in Norfolk Marine Park funded by OMPG2 (2021).[97]
    - A collaborative seabed mapping and baseline environmental survey of Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs undertaken by NESP and partners in Lord Howe Marine Park (2020).[98]
    - A study of Galapagos shark movement patterns and interactions with fishing vessels in the marine parks surrounding Lord Howe Island (2018-2021).[99]
    - A survey of benthic habitat and seabed features in the Solitary Islands Marine Park (2022).[100]

[96] *AODN Bathymetry Mapping of Gifford Marine Park 2026: https://www.data.gov.au/data/dataset/gifford-marine-park-bathymetry-30m-resolution-grid8*
[97] *Parks Australia News Article with project description 2021: https://parksaustralia.gov.au/news/norfolk-island-seafloor-mapping-reveals-deep-reefs-and-diverse-habitat/*
98 NESP Middleton and Elizabeth Reefs Post Survey Report 2021: https://www.nespmarine.edu.au/system/files/Nichol%20et%20al_2021_%20D3_M18%20Elizabeth%20and%20Middleton%20Reefs%20Post%20Survey%20Report_FINAL.pdf Nichol et al_2021_ D3_M18 Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs Post Survey Report_FINAL.pdf
99 Australian Marine Parks Galapagos Shark Movement Patterns and Interactions with Fishing Vessels in the Marine Parks Surrounding Lord Howe Island Report 2021: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/5601dc73324ea7657d20ebc996d05735/howe-island-galapagos-shark-report-for-parks-australia.pdf
[100] *Australian Marine Parks Mapping and Characterising Seabed Features and Benthic Habitats of the Solitary Islands Marine Park in the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Report 2024: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/734c97e56886d93a15c611222d227b33/amp-simp2024-report.pdf*

- A Reef Life Survey undertaken in the Cod Grounds Marine Park (2023).[101]
- A survey of reef habitat and fish assemblages in the Hunter Marine Park (2018).[102]
- A survey of East Australian Current canyons undertaken by CSIRO which provided baseline data for marine estate monitoring and to support marine park management in the Temperate East (2024).[103]

- In addition, the '*Social and Economic benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks'* evidenced the establishment of social and economic baselines. [104]

Evidence from engagement:

Some stakeholders were aware of ecological baseline data collection, specifically citing the examples in the Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island areas. In relation to the collection of social and economic baselines, while one stakeholder felt that the social values of the Temperate East Network had not been adequately measured over the course of the plan, another noted that a second iteration of the '*Social and Economic benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks'* was underway and due for publication in 2026, which would enhance achievement of this action.

It was noted by a few stakeholders that, at an overall level, the provision of funding for marine science (including baseline data collection) had supported more evidence-based decision-making over the course of the plan (e.g. habitat mapping and conduct of quality assessments). However, some stakeholders were less aware of the specific ways in which baseline data had been applied in management decisions, nor were involved in the process and suggested that communication around its use could be improved.

Action	Completion status
A28. Develop an Australian Marine Parks science strategy to prioritise and encourage research and monitoring of park values, pressures and management effectiveness, and foster science communication and knowledge uptake	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While an Australian Marine Parks science strategy was not developed, the Parks Australia Science Strategy was published.

Due to the delivery of the '*Parks Australia Science Strategy'* in December 2025 (i.e. during the conduct of this evaluation), evidence could not be obtained to illustrate the extent to which activities had been undertaken in accordance with the strategy, and hence the extent to which the strategy had effectively prioritised and encouraged research and monitoring of park values,

[101] *Reef Life Survey News Article Trip to Cod Grounds 2023: https://reeflifesurvey.com/rls-trip-to-cod-grounds-nsw-may-2023/*
[102] *NESP Mapping and Characterising Reef Habitat and Fish Assemblages of the Hunter Marine Park 2024: https://www.nespmarinecoastal.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Williams-et-al_D3_M10_Hunter-Marine-Park-Post-Survey-Report_FINAL.pdf*
[103] *CSIRO East Australian Current Canyons Survey 2024: https://www.csiro.au/en/about/facilities-collections/MNF/Voyages-schedules/Voyages/2024/June/IN2024_V04*
[104] *NESP Social and Economic Benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks 2021: https://api.research-repository.uwa.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/363774544/Navarro_et_al_D6_M12_M13_M17_Social_and_Economic_benchmarks_of_the_AMPs_FINAL.pdf*

pressures and management effectiveness, and fostered science communication and knowledge uptake.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review provided the following evidence of the development of the completion of the '*Parks Australia Science Strategy'* in place of the Australian Marine Parks science strategy:

- Cited internal documents pertaining to Parks Australia Marine Science Strategy project initiation (2024).[105]
- Publication of the 'Parks Australia Science Strategy' (2025).[106]
- This output was not found to meet the criterion of delivery in a timely manner, as its publication occurred in the seventh year of the management plan, which limited potential for the strategy to be implemented over the course of the plan.

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, consultations gave context as to why the Australian Marine Parks science strategy was not implemented as originally intended but also suggested limited satisfaction with this modified approach. Specifically, the following views were expressed:

- Consultation with Parks Australia staff highlighted challenges associated with the development of a unified science strategy that adequately covered all marine parks while reflecting the nuances of each network. This, along with resourcing constraints, was cited as the rationale for opting to develop the broader Parks Australia Science Strategy instead.
- Other stakeholders, however, were less satisfied with the adoption of a broader strategy that encompassed both marine and terrestrial parks, as they felt this approach did not adequately capture the specific issues, challenges and priorities of the Temperate East Network. As such, stakeholders expressed concern about the potential for the strategy to guide scientific activities aligned with the values and pressures unique to this network.

Action	Completion status
A29. Encourage and facilitate knowledge brokering to support collaboration and partnerships with the science community, private enterprise, citizen science organisations and other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While there was some evidence of knowledge brokering activities to support collaborations/ partnerships, these did not encompass the range of collaborative activities originally intended (i.e. collaborations/ partnerships with the science community, private enterprise, citizen science organisations and government agencies) and there was limited evidence of these activities occurring consistently across the life of the plan. Additionally, stakeholder views in relation to the effectiveness of knowledge brokering were mixed.

[105] *Parks Australia Project Initiative Document: cited internal document*

[106] *Parks Australia Science Strategy 2025: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/parks-australia-science-strategy.pdf*

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified examples of only a few knowledge brokering activities across the life of the plan, specifically:

- Bi-annual meetings of the Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC), commenced in 2019.[107]
- A collaboration deed between Parks Australia and the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) for activities in support of cooperative management of the Temperate East Network and State Marine Parks.[108] For example, this collaboration deed supported the Grey Nurse Shark and Black Cod monitoring program and Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUVS) surveying (2023) in the Solitary Islands Marine Park.

Evidence from engagement:

The main collaborative activities identified by stakeholders were partnerships or collaborations with members of the science community (i.e. researchers and universities) such as via grants and the NESP. Some stakeholders reported that these activities had supported knowledge brokering and sharing within the science community, such as by facilitating relationships between researchers, requiring grant recipients to share their results and initiatives to bring results and data from scientific studies together. However, other stakeholders felt that research activities were undertaken in a siloed environment where results were not shared with or easily accessed by others.

In addition, stakeholders acknowledged that some marine science information was shared through the TEMPAC, but members felt that knowledge brokering via this forum was limited as they had little awareness of the extent of marine science initiatives undertaken to support the implementation of the management plan.

Action	Completion status
A30. Establish an authorisation system for scientific research and monitoring by third parties and encourage data to be made publicly available through appropriate information portals such as the Australian Ocean Data Network (AODN)	**Completed**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **completed**. The evaluation found that an authorisation system for scientific research and monitoring by third parties was developed and operationalised in a timely manner. Data sharing arrangements were also established with the AODN which created public access. However, as noted above, a perception among some stakeholders that research and data were not readily communicated, available, or shared suggests that more could be done to ensure data is publicly accessible and clearly communicated.

[107] *Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/advisory-committees/temperate-east-marine-parks-advisory-committee/*
[108] *Memorandum of Understanding: Cited internal documents.*

Evidence from desktop review:

- The Australian Marine Parks Online Permit Portal Application launched in 2018.[109] This included a condition to enable data to be publicly available in portals such as the AODN portal.
- Publication of Temperate East marine science projects on the Australian Marine Parks website.[110]
- Publication of data across all eight marine parks made publicly available on the '*Seamap Australia*' website.[111]

Action	Completion status
A31. Collaborate with the science community (including through the National Marine Science Plan Committee and National Environmental Science Program) and other marine park users to assist in improving the understanding of marine park values, pressures and management effectiveness	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed** as the evaluation found evidence of collaborations with the science community and some community groups (i.e. the National Marine Science Committee [NMSC] and National Environmental Science Program [NESP]) through joint science initiatives and research collaborations. However, only some stakeholders felt that collaborations had effectively assisted in improving understanding of marine park values (particularly natural values), pressures and management effectiveness.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review provided the following evidence of strategic collaboration with the science community:

- Parks Australia membership to the NMSC.[112]
- Collaboration with the NESP.[113]
- Collaboration with the AODN and the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS). [114]

The desktop review provided the following evidence of collaboration with science community through marine science initiatives and research collaborations:

[109] Australia Marine park permits: https://onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/australian-marine-parks/permits
[110] *Australian Marine Parks Scientific Publications*: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/scientific-publications/
[111] *Seamap Australia Temperate East Network webpage:* https://seamapaustralia.org/region-reports/temperate-east/
[112] *National Marine Science Committee – About page: https://www.marinescience.net.au/aboutnmsc/*
[113] *Parks Australia science partnerships page – National Environmental Science Program: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/science-marine-parks/national-environmental-science-program-nesp/*
[114] *Parks Australia website science partnerships page – Integrated Marine Observing System: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/science-marine-parks/integrated-marine-observing-system-imos/*

- Marine Science initiatives funded through OMPG in the Temperate East Network.[115]
    - A seafloor mapping initiative undertaken by Deakin University and iXblue in Norfolk Marine Park (funded by OMPG2).[116]
    - A multi-media campaign undertaken by Norfolk Island Regional Council to educate and empower responsible care and use of the Norfolk Marine Park (funded by OMPG2).[117]
    - A project undertaken by Pendoley Environmental to train members of the local community in the Norfolk Marine Park in habitat survey methods (funded by OMPG2). [118]
    - A project with Flinders University in collaboration with Norfolk Island Regional Council to determine if the island's organic waste entering the marine park was a factor in the diet of tiger sharks (funded by OMPG3).[119]
    - A survey undertaken by Birdlife Australia of foraging habitats and flight patterns of the critically endangered Gould's petrel (Pterodroma leucoptera) in the Temperate East Network (funded by OMPG3).[120]
    - A project undertaken by Ocean Watch Australia to reduce fishing gear entanglements on Australia's growing east coast Humpback whale population (funded by OMPG3).[121]
    - A project with Flinders University in collaboration with Norfolk Island Regional Council to conduct research to support sustainable waste management and tourism in Norfolk Marine Park (funded by OMPG4).[122]
- Marine Science initiatives funded through OMPG applicable across all marine parks/ park networks.
    - Delivery of an online tracking tool for the Reef Life Survey website and a coffee table book to showcase dive opportunities in Australian Marine Parks (funded by OMPG2).[123]

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[115] *Australian Marine Parks Grants: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/our-marine-parks-grants/*

[116] *Parks Australia News Article with project description 2021: https://parksaustralia.gov.au/news/norfolk-island-seafloor-mapping-reveals-deep-reefs-and-diverse-habitat/*

[117] *Norfolk Island Regional Council media release with project description 2021: https://www.nirc.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/your-council/documents/nirc-media-releases/2021-02-26-media-release-marine-park-survey.pdf*

[118] *Australian Marine Parks news article with project description 2021: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/news/norfolk-marine-park-habitat-mapping-projects/*

[119] *Surf or turf? Behavioural associations between tiger sharks and butcher's waste at Norfolk Island dataset 2025: https://open.flinders.edu.au/articles/dataset/Surf_or_turf_Behavioural_associations_between_tiger_sharks_and_butcher_s_waste_at_Norfolk_Island/30643232?file=59642633*

[120] *Australian Marine Parks Grants round three: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/our-marine-parks-grants/grants-round-three/*

[121] *Ibid.*

[122] *Australian Marine Parks Grants round four: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/our-marine-parks-grants/grants-round-four/*

[123] *Australian Marine Parks Grants round two: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/2b7aff986015d07009d5d04fd9b13d48/our-marine-park-grants-round-two-projects.pdf*

- Project with Macquarie University to identify where the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act listed species occur within Australian Marine Parks (funded by OMPG2).[124]

Evidence from engagement:

Some stakeholders reported that collaborations with the science community had contributed to improved understanding of marine park values, pressures, and management effectiveness. Those more actively involved in partnerships with Parks Australia noted significant improvements, particularly in recent years (i.e. the past 3–4 years). Specific examples of collaborations were highlighted in areas such as Coffs Harbour, including initiatives like the deployment of equipment (e.g. BRUVS, Remotely Operated Vehicles [ROVs], and temperate loggers) in partnership with organisations such as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the University of Tasmania (UTAS), and the NESP.

However, some stakeholders expressed concerns about the lack of a strategic approach by Parks Australia in forming collaborations and conducting projects. They suggested that Parks Australia should seek to better align grant priorities with the objectives of the Temperate East Management Plan to ensure more targeted and effective outcomes.

More broadly, stakeholders emphasised the need for mechanisms to strengthen collaboration with the science community and other users. These included improving access to scientific publications and providing clearer evidence of progress in marine park management. Such measures were seen as critical to building a deeper understanding of marine park values, pressures, and the effectiveness of management efforts.

Action	Completion status
A32. Collaborate with the science community and other government agencies to increase the use of innovative and effective technology and systems including sensor technology	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. While there is evidence to suggest that Parks Australia has increased its use of innovative and effective technology in partnership with the scientific community and government agencies, some stakeholders suggested there was room for improvement in these efforts.

Evidence from desktop review:

- A seafloor mapping initiative undertaken by Deakin University and iXblue in Norfolk Marine Park funded by OMPG2. This project featured geo-imaging in drone aerial surveying of Norfolk Island as well as the use of BRUVS.[125]

[124] *Ibid.*

[125] *Parks Australia News Article with project description 2021: https://parksaustralia.gov.au/news/norfolk-island-seafloor-mapping-reveals-deep-reefs-and-diverse-habitat/*

- Collaboration with NESP, Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and UTAS to survey life across the continental shelf of Hunter Marine Park using BRUVS.[126]
- Diver Survey and BRUVS fieldwork conducted from 2001 to 2024, which included the Solitary Islands Marine Park.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholders expressed mixed views on Parks Australia's effectiveness in collaborating with the scientific community and government agencies to increase the use of innovative technology. Some stakeholders highlighted positive outcomes, noting that collaborations had facilitated the adoption of innovative technologies. For example, partnerships with organisations such as Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) and state agencies were credited with advancing seabed mapping efforts, and initiatives like the OMPG program were seen as valuable opportunities provided by Parks Australia to support innovation.

However, other stakeholders felt that the expansion and application of new technologies were not being fully utilised or widely shared by the Commonwealth. For instance, one stakeholder pointed out that blue bottle technology (i.e. uncrewed surface vessels providing persistent surface and sub-surface surveillance) was not being adequately shared across the industry, limiting its broader impact.

Additionally, concerns were raised about the adoption of innovative tools and technologies without fully considering their limitations. While stakeholders acknowledged the valuable contributions of the science community in developing tools and indicators to support data collection and reporting, they cautioned against viewing new technologies as "silver bullet" solutions. For example, environmental DNA (eDNA) was recognised as a promising tool, but its limitations (such as the inability to determine the origin or distance travelled by a water sample) were highlighted. Stakeholders noted that new approaches are sometimes trialled without sufficient evaluation of their effectiveness, demonstrating the importance of clearly defining metrics and indicators to guide monitoring efforts. Ultimately, stakeholders stressed that innovation should be driven by clearly identified needs rather than the pursuit of novelty for its own sake.

Action	Completion status
A33. Monitor social and economic uses and their benefits and impacts on marine parks in the Network	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

The action was assessed as **partially completed**. Initial baseline social and economic monitoring has been conducted, with a second round of monitoring scheduled for completion and publication in 2026.

Evidence from desktop review:

[126] *Surveying Life in Hunter Marine Park: https://www.nespmarinecoastal.edu.au/story/lights-cameras-pilchards-and-whales-surveying-life-in-hunter-marine-park/*

The evaluation found that monitoring efforts across the Temperate East Network have predominantly focused on ecological aspects, with less emphasis on social and economic uses. However, the desktop review identified that boat ramp surveys were conducted at Coffs Harbour and Jervis Bay as part of the NESP '*Social and Economic benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks'* project. These surveys included questions on usage, awareness, communication method, and perceptions of marine parks. It was noted that extreme bushfires in early 2020 impacted the surveys conducted at Jervis Bay. The final report from this project was delivered in 2021[127]. A stakeholder indicated that a repeat of the survey is planned for 2026 to evaluate changes in awareness over time.

Action	Completion status
A34. Monitor the condition of important habitats and their vulnerability to climate change	**Completed**

Evidence

The action was assessed as **completed**. Evidence indicated conduct of a range of monitoring activities of the condition of important habitats and their vulnerability to climate change, as listed below.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Annual reef health monitoring undertaken in Norfolk Marine Park since 2020 funded by Parks Australia and delivered by researchers from UNSW/SIMS, the University of Newcastle and collaborating institutions. The monitoring program provides ongoing assessment of the health of the Emily Bay and Slaughter Bay lagoonal reefs, including of coral bleaching, coral recovery, disease, algal growth and other ecosystem health indicators, generating annual evidence to inform marine park management. These annual surveys have been funded either directly by Parks Australia or via OMPG grants.[128]
- Project with University of Tasmania in partnership with Traditional Owners to collect baseline data for deep reef ecosystems and investigate the impact of climate change and marine heatwaves (funded by OMPG4).[129]
- East Australian Current Canyons Survey conducted by CSIRO which provided baseline data for marine estate monitoring and to support marine park management in the Temperate East Network.[130]

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[127] *NESP Social and Economic Benchmarks of the Australian Marine Parks 2021: https://api.research-repository.uwa.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/363774544/Navarro_et_al_D6_M12_M13_M17_Social_and_Economic_benchmarks_of_the_AMPs_FINAL.pdf*

[128] *Australian Marine Parks Norfolk Island Lagoonal Reef Ecosystem Health Publications: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/scientific-publications/norfolk-island-lagoonal-reef-ecosystem-health/*

[129] *Assessing the effects of climate change and marine heatwaves on deep reef ecosystems across the Temperate East Marine Parks Network: https://figshare.utas.edu.au/articles/conference_contribution/Assessing_the_effects_of_climate_change_and_marine_heatwaves_on_deep_reef_ecosystems_across_the_Temperate_East_Marine_Parks_Network_for_improved_management/27906954?file=50804064*

[130] *East Australian Current canyons survey 2024: https://www.csiro.au/en/about/facilities-collections/MNF/Voyages-schedules/Voyages/2024/June/IN2024_V04*

- See further evidence of habitat monitoring under A27.

Action	Completion status
A35. Monitor the impact of invasive species on marine park values and the effectiveness of management	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

The action was assessed as **partially completed**. Although there was some evidence of monitoring activities, the available information was limited, and stakeholders were unable to provide detailed insights into the effectiveness of these efforts.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Biosecurity assessments in Norfolk Marine Park (2022) found there were no current invasive species.[131]

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholders reported broad awareness of the conduct of surveys and monitoring of invasive species, however, could not provide further detail in relation to their effectiveness.

[131] *Norfolk Marine Park Invasive Species Report 2022: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/final-report-norfolk-marine-park-invasive-marine-species-ims-survey-june2022.pdf*

Action	Completion status
A36. Collaborate with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board, marine park users, and the science sector to support long-term monitoring. For example, monitoring of coral reefs, protected species and effects of fishing on marine parks	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

The action was assessed as **partially completed**. Limited desktop evidence was available to evaluate the extent of collaboration between Parks Australia and stakeholders in supporting long-term monitoring efforts. Furthermore, stakeholder feedback regarding the support and sustainability of collaborative long-term monitoring programs was mixed.

Evidence from desktop review:

A project was conducted with the University of New South Wales to identify impacts, resilience and recovery of Norfolk coral reef habitat to local and global pressures. This research has been used to provide long-term evidence to support the targeted management of the Norfolk Island coral reef catchment and reef ecosystem (funded by OMPG4) – as outlined in A34.

Evidence from engagement:

One stakeholder provided positive feedback on Parks Australia's collaboration with the science sector to support long-term monitoring, highlighting examples such as seabed monitoring and remote underwater surveys. They noted that Parks Australia supported these efforts through financial investment and by inviting researchers to TEMPAC meetings to share and discuss their findings.

Other stakeholders also acknowledged Parks Australia's efforts to collaborate with organisations to support long-term monitoring, recognising this as a critical component for delivering actions under the Marine Science Program outlined in the plan. However, one stakeholder expressed concern that some organisations did not consistently reciprocate these efforts or prioritise long-term monitoring, which created challenges for establishing effective and sustained collaboration.

Action	Completion status
A37. Investigate opportunities to extend citizen science programs	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**. The evaluation identified some evidence of investigation of new citizen science initiatives, particularly in Lord Howe Marine Park and Norfolk Marine Park.

Evidence from desktop review to support this assessment:

- Lord Howe Marine Park Elizabeth Reef recreational fishing citizen science initiative proposed in a TEMPAC meeting.[132]
- Junior Ranger Program for Norfolk Island National Park and Norfolk Marine Park.[133]

[132] *TEMPAC Out of Session meeting 1: Internally cited document.*
[133] *Junior Ranger Program Operational Plan Norfolk Island National Park and Norfolk Marine Park: Internally cited document.*

8. Findings: Assessments and Authorisations Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the **Assessments and Authorisations Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan.*

8.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Good	Overall, the grade for the actions in the **Assessments and Authorisations Program** was assessed as good. The outcome of the management program was assessed to be 'fully met' and six out of seven of the planned actions were 'completed' or 'ongoing', with one deemed as 'not commenced', and with positive stakeholder feedback provided. While A40 (*develop an effective and efficient process to assess new technologies and gear types to allow for the use of new equipment during the life of this plan if appropriate*) was assessed as 'not commenced', this was not considered a significant gap. Evidence indicated that fisheries agencies were responsible for development and impact assessment of new technologies and gear types, suggesting the action may not have been required during the plan's implementation. As a result, its non-completion did not impede the overall aims of the management program.

Strengths and achievements

The evaluation found a range of strengths and achievements in relation to the management program, including the:

- **Development of a range of policies, processes and procedures followed** – to support the implementation of the planned actions and achievement of the outcome (as discussed in section 8.3 below).
- **Adoption of tailored and flexible approaches to the assessment of authorisation applications where relevant**, whilst still maintaining a focus on the protection of marine park values – in particular, the use of tailored processes and approaches that considered the unique context of authorisations for those living or working on Norfolk Island, including the involvement of the Norfolk Island Regional Council in these matters.
- **Introduction and use of the online portal for submitting applications** – which was felt to improve the ease of the application process for park users over the course of the plan and assist in providing timely assessments.

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

A number of challenges and barriers were identified by stakeholders, including:

- **Complexities and challenges for authorisations and assessments for activities in and around Norfolk Island** – despite the tailored approaches taken to assessing authorisation requests relating to Norfolk Island, stakeholders reported that there was a continuing lack of clarity in relation to when assessments needed to be sought, particularly if activities crossed jurisdictions (e.g. infrastructure that crossed the high water line). Other complications related to the unique context of Norfolk Marine Park as an Australian Marine Park (AMP) bordering a permanent

community of over 2000 people (e.g. in relation to direct wastewater disposal and marine debris).

- **Limited awareness of assessment and authorisation activities**, particularly amongst Temperate East Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC) members – TEMPAC stakeholders reported limited awareness of the nature and number of applications made and authorisations granted in the Temperate East Network. These stakeholders expressed a desire for this information to be shared with them directly, to support their understanding of marine park management decisions and activities. Additionally, if possible, some TEMPAC stakeholders expressed a desire to have an opportunity to provide feedback on authorisation decisions, particularly for non-standard applications or applications that could have large-scale impacts on the Temperate East Network.

8.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O10. Assessments and authorisations ensure ongoing protection of marine park values through the management of activities in marine parks	Fully met	Trend getting better

Evidence

This outcome was assessed as **fully met**, with a positive trend identified over the course of the plan to date.

Evidence from engagement:

At the overall level, stakeholders felt that the assessments and authorisation processes and decisions had been largely effective in protecting marine park values. External stakeholders appreciated the balanced approach taken to assessments and authorisations, where environmental marine park values were felt to be protected without unduly constraining other social or economic activities where possible. However, one stakeholder identified some challenges when working with Parks Australia to secure an authorisation for a non-standard activity. In this case, they felt that the social value/ necessity of the activity should have been prioritised.

Similarly, Parks Australia staff indicated that they felt that assessments and authorisations had been effective in supporting the protection of marine park values, specifically citing the use of tailored approaches to individual applications where required to ensure any adverse impacts were mitigated as far as possible.

8.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Assessments and Authorisations Program.

Action	Completion status
A38. Develop and apply best-practice approaches to regulation and decision-making in the authorisation of activities within marine parks. This includes developing policy to ensure assessment and authorisation requirements are clearly articulated and that decision making is robust, consistently applied, and transparent to all marine park users	**Completed**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**. Considerable documentary evidence of the timely development and application of best practice approaches was identified, and while some stakeholders felt that the transparency of decision-making could be improved, moderate to positive ratings were given in relation to this action overall.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified a number of activities undertaken over the course of the management plan to achieve this action. Firstly, the desktop review identified the following evidence of best practice approaches being developed for regulation and decision-making:

- Compilation of the *'Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy'* (2021), which outlines the approach to authorisation and assessment of allowable activities among all marine parks in accordance with the management plans.[134]
- A commentary within the *'Guiding Actions'* section of this policy that highlighted how decision-making would align with best-practice approaches.

Additional documentary evidence was identified to suggest that authorisation decisions were robust, consistently applied and transparent, specifically:

- The robust nature of authorisation decisions was evidenced by the following documents which outlined clear decision-making criteria and processes:
    - An internal checklist outlining the decision-making criteria for authorisation of activities within marine parks.[135]
    - A Peer Review Permit checklist outlining the steps taken in the peer review process for authorisations.[136]
    - A data quality check register which documents the data quality checks undertaken on application and authorisation data to ensure their accuracy.[137] This also included information about the staff responsible for conducting these checks from 2020 – 2022.

[134] *Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy. https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6f5d83193c7046f4d03dff87df2dcefd/amp-document-dnp-policy-authorisations-and-assessments.pdf*
[135] *24 - 0.1 - Checklist: Internal document*
[136] *25 - 0.5 - Peer Review Permit review checklist: Internal document*
[137] *19 - 0.4 MP Assessments and Authorisations - CRM Procedure 02 - Data Quality Checks: Internal document*

- Consistency in the application of decision-making criteria was evidenced by:
  - Park's Australia's '*Assessments and Authorisations – Standard Operating Procedure'*, which documented the assessment process and how to move through each step when doing the assessment process as an administrative officer.[138]
  - A flowchart demonstrating the assessment process for internal use by Parks Australia staff.[139]
  - A guide to assessing commercial tourism operations for internal use by Parks Australia staff. [140]
- Transparency in authorisation decisions was evidenced by:
  - Development of the 'Australian Marine Parks Authorisation Consultation Guide'.[141]
  - The standard operating procedures for AMP assessments and authorisations.[142]
  - The public record of permits and activity licences issued by the Director of National Parks (the Director) since 2018.[143]
  - The publicly available outline of the Authorisation and Assessments Program.[144]

The delivery of activities was found to start within the first few years of the management program, suggesting the timely completion of this activity.

Evidence from engagement:

Only some stakeholders had experienced applying for and obtaining authorisations. Most of these stakeholders were broadly positive about assessment and authorisations processes, including in relation to the issue of fishing permits. Parks Australia staff also provided positive feedback, noting that they employed a risk-based process that was tailored to the circumstances of individual applicants/ marine parks and had the flexibility to be updated in collaboration with other agencies as required.

However, many stakeholders expressed a desire for additional transparency about the nature and number of assessments granted within the Temperate East Network, as well as what the requirements/ criteria were to achieve authorisations. This suggests that there is scope to better communicate this information with stakeholders, particularly members of the TEMPAC.

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[138] *Assessments and Authorisations - Standard Operating Procedure: Internal document*
[139] *Assessment process - flowchart: Internal document*
[140] *Guide to assessing commercial tourism operations: Internal document*
[141] *Australian Marine Parks Authorisation Consultation Guideline: Internal document*
[142] *Assessments and Authorisations - Standard Operating Procedure: Internal document*
[143] *Authorisations webpage https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/access-use/authorisations/*
[144] *Authorisations & assessments program: web page https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/authorisations-assessments-program/*

Action	Completion status
A39. Collaborate with industry to investigate innovative technologies and systems (including vessel monitoring systems) that can assist businesses and individuals to comply with regulatory requirements	**Completed**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**. Considerable documentary evidence of the investigation and implementation of innovative technologies was identified, as well as some evidence of collaboration with industry. Of the few stakeholders who were able to give feedback in relation to this action, most gave moderate to positive ratings.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified the investigation and implementation of the mandatory VMS as the key innovative compliance technologies introduced over the course of the plan, supported by collaboration with industry (such as fisheries management agencies). More specifically, the desktop review found that:

- The Electronic and VMS Assistance Program was first introduced, which provided $5.5 million grant funding through relevant states and territory fisheries management agencies to support initiatives that increase the uptake of electronic and vessel monitoring systems by commercial fishers.[145]
- The 2024 VMS was then implemented in 2024 for all commercial vessels operating in or transiting through AMPs.[146] This includes an automatic alert service that will alert non-compliant vessels that enter an AMP (i.e. if a vessel enters an AMP with primary gear that is non-compliant in the AMP).[147]

Evidence from engagement:

Many stakeholders had limited feedback in relation to this action, but those to whom it was relevant provided moderate to positive ratings overall. One recreational fisher stakeholder reported that, while they were aware of some innovative technologies being used on a small scale (such as shark deterrents used on fishing lines), they would like to see use of this expended more broadly.

Additionally, Parks Australia staff reported that a range of technologies had been implemented over the course of the plan to assist with compliance, including VMS, sound traps and Bluebottle vessels.

[145] *Electronic & vessel monitoring systems assistance program webpage: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/about/fisheries-assistance/electronic-vessel-monitoring-systems-assistance-program/*

[146] *Mandatory Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) for commercial fishers in Australian Marine Parks webpage: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/access-use/commercial-approvals/commercial-fishing/mandatory-vessel-monitoring-systems-vms-commercial-fishers-australian-marine-parks/*

[147] *Australian Marine Parks Compliance Report, Q1 2023: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/e3c8ac92cec8e2c57dec4ea1cd44c048/amp-compliance-qtr-report-1-julsep-2023.pdf*

Action	Completion status
A40. Develop an effective and efficient process to assess new technologies and gear types to allow for the use of new equipment during the life of this plan if appropriate	**Not commenced**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **not commenced**. Based on the self-assessment of the Temperate East Network Management Plan, Parks Australia deemed this action to not be relevant or required for the management plan as there were existing effective processes to assess the impacts and suitability of new technologies and gear types.[148] Parks Australia staff clarified that the assessment of new fishing gear types in particular was not relevant for the management plans, as these would need to be assessed by other Commonwealth or state/ territory regulators, including Fishery Departments, before being assessed by Parks Australia.

Action	Completion status
A41. Develop a guarantee of service for the regulated community that includes a commitment to work with key marine park users and interest groups whose interests are likely to be affected by regulatory decisions	**Completed**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed,** with documentary evidence of a timely guarantee of service identified. However, there were mixed views amongst stakeholders in relation to the adequacy of consultation regarding regulatory decisions.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review found that a guarantee of service had been developed, as referenced in

- Sections 5.1 and 7.5 of the *'Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy'* (2021) – which included a commitment to work with marine park users in relation to new class approvals.[149]
- 'The Director of National Parks Corporate Plan' 2024-2025. [150]
- The Australian Marine Parks Indigenous Engagement Program, which outlines how Parks Australia will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to undertake marine park management, such as monitoring and threat mitigation activities and surveillance.[151]

[148] *Parks Australia Temperate east self-assessment: Internal document*
[149] *Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6f5d83193c7046f4d03dff87df2dcefd/amp-document-dnp-policy-authorisations-and-assessments.pdf*
[150] *Director of National Parks Corporate Plan 2024-2025 https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/dnp-corporate-plan-2024-25.pdf*
[151] *Australian Marine Parks Indigenous Engagement Program webpage https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/indigenous-engagement-program/*

The *'Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy'* was delivered within the first four years of the management program, suggesting the timely completion of this activity.

Evidence from engagement:

Parks Australia staff reported engaging with park users and other government agencies in relation to assessments and authorisations. This included working with other regulators to align authorisation and assessment processes where possible, as well as working with applicants to reduce regulatory burden where appropriate.

However, mixed feedback was received from the few external stakeholders who were able to comment on the effectiveness of consultation regarding regulatory decisions. While there were moderate to high levels of satisfaction with this consultation amongst some stakeholders (particularly during the second half of the management plan), some felt that they had not been engaged appropriately during the first years of the management plan or that not all key stakeholders were included in consultations. Specifically, a couple of stakeholders felt that spear fishers had been excluded from consultation.

Action	Completion status
A42. Develop a customer focused online authorisation system for marine park users that includes publishing authorisations issued by Parks Australia on its website	**Completed**
Evidence	
Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**. The desktop review identified documentary evidence of an online portal for permit and licence applications for marine park users[152] and the publication of authorisations granted since 2018 online.[153]	

Action	Completion status
A43. Issue authorisations—a permit, class approval, activity licence or lease—for activities in the marine park assessed as acceptable either by the Director or another government or industry policy, plan or program accepted by the Director	**Ongoing**
Evidence	
Overall, this action was assessed as **ongoing** as there was clear documentary evidence of authorisations being assessed and issued in and timely manner, and of the few stakeholders who provided feedback in relation to this action, most felt it had been implemented effectively.	

[152] *Australian Marine Parks - Permit and license applications, online portal https://onlineservices.environment.gov.au/parks/australian-marine-parks*
[153] *Authorisations webpage https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/access-use/authorisations/*

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified evidence of a number of authorisations being issued by the Director for the Temperate East Network since 2018.[154] Documentary evidence of the policies and processes in place to ensure appropriate and timely assessments was also identified, including via:

- The assessments and authorisations standard operating procedure document, which outlines the assessment process for licences and permits.[155]
- A flowchart outlining the process of assessment of approvals, permits or licenses.[156]
- The '*Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy*'.[157] In particular, this document highlights how the Director will endeavour to conclude assessments and make decisions within 40 business days of receiving an application.
- An internal guidance document in relation to petroleum activities in AMPs, which outlines the process for consulting with the Director on authorisations for the energy sector.[158]

Evidence from engagement:

Of the few stakeholders who were able to comment on the authorisations process, most provided positive feedback about their experiences. Specifically, these stakeholders reported that they were not aware of any issues and did not have any concerns with the authorisations process, and one noted that they had appreciated the balanced approach taken to considering environmental, social and economic values and outcomes when considering applications. However, one recreational fishing stakeholder felt that the process was overly "arduous" due to the amount of information asked of applicants and lack of timely response received.

Action	Completion status
A44. Work with other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies to improve experiences and consistency of approaches for people seeking authorisations	Ongoing

Evidence

Overall, this action was felt to be **ongoing** as there was clear documentary evidence of activities in support of the experience and consistency of approaches for those seeking authorisations, though there was some appetite for future improvement amongst stakeholders.

[154] *Authorisations webpage https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/access-use/authorisations/*
[155] *17 - 0.2 MP Assessments and Authorisations - Standard Operating Procedure: Internal document*
[156] *21 - Authorisations Manual - flowchart for assessment of approval, permit or licence: Internal document*
[157] *Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisations Policy https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6f5d83193c7046f4d03dff87df2dcefd/amp-document-dnp-policy-authorisations-and-assessments.pdf*
[158] *03 - Guidance note - Petroleum Activities and Australian Marine Parks: Internal document. Refer to p. 8 "Consulting with the Director of National Parks"*

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified several collaborative activities with Commonwealth and state/ territory government agencies to support the experience and consistency of approaches for authorisations, including:

- A joint public statement with The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA)[159] about the legislative regime for petroleum activities in and around all marine parks (including the Temperate East). This document was intended to assist petrol titleholders nationally to understand their regulation and authorisation obligations.
- An information sheet from NSW Department of Primary Industries, NSW Government Transport, Roads and Maritime Services and Lord Howe Island Board.[160] This document is an information sheet for people accessing Lord Howe Island via yachts and other small boat crafts.
- An open access website for Norfolk Island National Park that provides information on how to apply for permits for activities in Norfolk Island National Park.[161]
- Information pages, including from the NSW Government[162] and from the Department of Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).[163]
- An internal email chain outlining communication between DCCEEW and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in relation to streamlining a permit process for the HydroScheme 2026 surveys across Australian Marine Parks.[164]

Evidence from engagement:

Only a few stakeholders were able to provide feedback directly relevant to this particular action. While a few of these stakeholders considered that consistency in authorisations processes could be improved further, one stakeholder from Norfolk Island gave positive feedback about efforts to increase consistency for park users on the Island.

Parks Australia staff reported working closely with a range of other government agencies (e.g. NOPSEMA) to enhance consistency in the authorisations process for park users, as well as aligning Commonwealth and state rules where possible to reduce confusion/ complexity in the application process.

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[159] *Petroleum activities and Australian Marine Parks: Internal document*

[160] *Information for yachts and small craft visiting Lord Howe Island World Heritage Area and Lord Howe Island Marine Park: https://www.lhib.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/Information%20Sheet%20-%20Visiting%20Vessels%20-%20FY%202021.PDF*

[161] *Permits: https://norfolkislandnationalpark.gov.au/plan/plan-your-trip/permits/*

[162] *Permits and approvals: https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/marine-protected-areas/marine-parks/lord-howe-island-marine-park/park-management/permits*

[163] *Permits and licences: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/parks-heritage/national-parks/norfolk-island-national-park/permits-and-licences*

[164] *Internal email chain provided to ORIMA Research.*

9. Findings: Parks Protection and Management Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the **Parks Protection and Management Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Management Plan.*

9.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade	
Good with some concerns	The **Parks Protection and Management Program** was assessed as 'good with some concerns', with the overall outcome of the management program rated as 'partially met'. Of the nine planned actions, six were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing', while the remaining three were assessed as 'partially completed'. Although several actions were only partially completed, the evidence suggests that these efforts were making positive process. Overall, the evaluation found that more timely and genuine collaboration, along with improved knowledge-sharing and awareness of activities among stakeholders, could further help to enhance the effectiveness of the program's implementation.

Strengths and achievements

The evaluation highlighted key strengths in the implementation of this program, particularly through the development and adherence to tangible processes and strategies that supported the protection and management of marine parks. This was evidenced by the implementation of initiatives such as the risk-based assessment and critical incident strategy, detailed in A45, 46 and 47 (below).

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

There was some evidence of collaboration between Parks Australia and other bodies and agencies, including through grants aimed at supporting the ongoing protection and management of Marine Parks within the Temperate East Network. However, this collaboration was generally perceived as limited and not always timely, with specific concerns raised in relation to A53 (where engagement with First Nations communities was noted as infrequent and lacking sufficient evidence of meaningful collaboration).

Compounding this issue was a general lack of knowledge and awareness among stakeholders about the activities under this program. This suggests that strengthening collaboration and improving communication with stakeholders could enhance the program's impact and foster greater shared responsibility for marine park management.

9.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O11. Impact of pressures on marine park values have been minimised as far as reasonably practicable	Partially met	Trend getting better

Evidence

The Temperate East Network was found to have **partially met** this outcome, with some evidence of ongoing activities aimed at minimising the impact of pressures.

Evidence from desktop review:

A number of grants and contracts were provided to support research into tracking the impacts of pressures and mitigation of these pressures in the Temperate East Network. These included:

- Mitigating the impacts of the fishing sectors and seafood industry on the Galapagos shark in 2023 and on humpback whales in 2022.[165] [166]
- Monitoring of lagoonal coral reefs ecosystem in Norfolk Marine Park, ongoing since 2020, including of damage/ bleaching due to climate change, human presence and marine pollution.[167]
- Self-reported use of research to inform management decisions, particularly for priority parks (including Norfolk and Lord Howe Marine Parks). This included application of the data about pressures to inform decision-making.

Further evidence is also described in A48, 50, 51 and 52 (below).

9.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Parks Protection and Management program.

Action	Completion status
A45. Apply a risk-based assessment process to prioritise park protection and management actions	Completed

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**, with the risk-based assessment process being developed and applied in a timely manner.

[165] *Lord Howe Island Shark Research Program Final Report: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/f0f4d008c5b1ac321a9d312bfe307982/final-report-for-pa-by-uwa_lhi-shark-research-progam.pdf*

[166] *Parks Australia Marine Park Grants Round Three Projects: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/34e05cdfb4b82c5919f6d4d7779b57b0/our-marine-park-grants-round-three-projects-v2.pdf*

[167] *Norfolk Island Lagoonal Reef Ecosystem Health Assessment 2023-2024: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/661d707bd330655b18d537fc80cb87bf/final-reef-health-report-2024.pdf*

Evidence from desktop review:

- A Network-wide Risk Management Matrix was included in the '*Australian Marine Parks Assessment and Authorisation Policy*' (2021).[168]
- The inclusion of an objective in the '*Network-wide National Environmental Science Program*' project to analyse risks posed by pressures to the values of marine parks.[169]
- Pressure Assessment and Program Risk Assessment conducted for the Temperate East, demonstrating application of risk-based assessment process to Temperate East Network context.[170] [171]

Action	Completion status
A46. Develop an Australian Marine Parks critical incident strategy in collaboration with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and other responsible agencies to respond to critical incidents	**Completed**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**, with the output being delivered in a timely manner.

Evidence from desktop review:

- The '*Network-wide AMP Environmental Incident and Emergency Response Strategy*' was developed in 2018 and updated in 2021 in collaboration across networks with AMSA and relevant agencies.[172] This strategy outlines the responsibilities, involvement and collaboration of Commonwealth agencies when responding to critical incidents.
- Implementation and collaboration was evident through incident response exercise training conducted jointly between Parks Australia and a number of state/ territory and Commonwealth Government agencies and departments.[173]

Action	Completion status
A47. Develop a mooring and anchoring strategy to protect marine park values and improve visitor experience	**Completed**

Evidence

[168] *Australian Marine Parks Authorisation and Assessments Policy: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6f5d83193c7046f4d03dff87df2dcefd/amp-document-dnp-policy-authorisations-and-assessments.pdf*
[169] *https://www.nespmarine.edu.au/project/project-ss2-%e2%80%93-interpreting-pressure-profiles.html*
[170] *Temperate East Pressure Assessment: Internal document.*
[171] *Program Risk Assessment for the Temperate East: Internal document.*
[172] *Australian Marine Parks -Strategy Environmental Incident and Emergency Response Strategy: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/4d3102f2098731e86292992d9f15b739/amp-document-mpa-environmental-incident-and-emergency-response-strategy.pdf*
[173] *AMP Incident and Exercise Register: Internal document.*

This action was assessed as **completed** in a timely manner, as evidenced through the desktop review.

Evidence from desktop review:

The '*Australian Marine Parks Mooring Policy*' was developed and finalised in 2021.[174]

Action	Completion status
A48. Support the removal of marine debris and ghost nets from marine parks through partnerships with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies and other organisations involved in the management of marine debris	**Ongoing**

Evidence

This action was assessed as **ongoing**, with the desktop review finding evidence of Parks Australia supporting the removal of marine debris and ghost nets from marine parks through partnerships in the Temperate East.

However, many stakeholders were either unsure or did not necessarily believe effective collaboration had been achieved across the network.

Evidence from desktop review:

- The Ghost Nets Initiative was deployed, which involved collaboration across Commonwealth and state agencies (including the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), Maritime Border Command under the Australian Border Force, other organisations and First Nations Ranger Groups. A grant program to support research into innovative solutions to detect, collect and dispose of ghost nets was also supported.[175]
- The '*Australian Marine Park Marine Debris Strategy*' was developed which outlined Commonwealth level collaborations and partnerships to respond to marine debris.[176]
- Media releases were developed about activities conducted to remove ghost nets from Norfolk Marine Park in partnership with other state agencies and organisations.[177]

Evidence from engagement:

While desktop evidence highlighted examples of Parks Australia supporting the removal of marine debris and ghost nets through partnerships, stakeholders were either unaware of these efforts or had not been directly involved in them. Many felt that such activities were primarily carried out by local communities near closer-to-shore marine parks. One stakeholder observed that the Temperate East Network "did not have many islands where this stuff can visibly wash up", whilst acknowledging their limited awareness of the extent of marine debris within the network.

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[174] *Australian Marine Parks Mooring Policy: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/179c407a2f3aedc78a01ad6ca7b8835e/amp-document-amp-mooring-policy.pdf*

[175] *Ghost Nets and Marine Debris Initiative: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/partnerships/ghost-nets-and-marine-debris-initiative/*

[176] *Australian Marine Park Marine Debris Strategy: Internal document*

[177] *Parks Australia media release: https://parksaustralia.gov.au/news/norfolk-marine-park-managers-update-ghost-net-removed-norfolk-marine-park/*

It was suggested by stakeholders that Parks Australia could enhance knowledge sharing by drawing on the experiences of those who have encountered marine debris, thereby fostering greater awareness and support for these initiatives.

Action	Completion status
A49. Contribute to actions, where appropriate, that support Australia's obligations under international agreements and national environmental law (e.g., World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, recovery plans, wildlife conservation plans and threat abatement plans)	Ongoing

Evidence

This action was assessed as **ongoing** as outputs have been delivered and most stakeholders felt that appropriate actions had been undertaken to support Australia's obligations.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Science publications about research programs and surveys conducted in 2022, 2023 and 2025, which Parks Australia supported. These publications related to research on World Heritage sites as well as on the ecosystems and species the World Heritage sites support (e.g. Lord Howe Island's Galapagos sharks; Norfolk Island, its ecosystems and the invasive species which threaten it).[178] [179] [180]
- The '*Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan*' (2025), which outlined the management and supporting actions necessary to stop the decline and support the recovery of threatened species – in alignment with the management and conservation required for World Heritage sites.[181]
- Self-reported support of conservation of Ramsar Wetlands site Elizabeth and Middleton Reefs and site monitoring/ mapping.[182] This was supported by the Ramsar Information Sheet which included details and contribution from DCCEEW as a managing body in and around the reefs.[183]

Evidence from engagement:

Parks Australia stakeholders indicated that responsibility for this action primarily sat with colleagues at the AFFMA, who were perceived as successfully managing the fulfilment of these obligations.

Most other stakeholders assumed that Australia had taken appropriate steps in signing international agreements, treaties, and obligations but expressed limited awareness of the

[178] *Parks Australia scientific publication: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/scientific-publications/lord-howe-island-shark-research-program/*
[179] *Parks Australia scientific publication: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/science/scientific-publications/norfolk-island-lagoonal-reef-ecosystem-health/norfolk-island-lagoonal-reef-ecosystem-health-2025/*
[180] *Norfolk Marine Park Invasive Marine Species Survey Report: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/final-report-norfolk-marine-park-invasive-marine-species-ims-survey-june2022.pdf*
[181] *Norfolk Island Region Threatened Species Recovery Plan: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/norfolk-island-region-threatened-species-recovery-plan.pdf*
[182] *Self-assessment report: Internal document*
[183] *Ramsar Information Sheet: https://rsis.ramsar.org/RISapp/files/RISrep/AU1223RIS_2503_en.pdf*

effectiveness of these commitments. Among the few stakeholders familiar with these processes, some highlighted their political and largely "soft" nature, noting that while commitments were often made, they were not always fully implemented.

Action	Completion status
A50. Enable infrastructure such as moorings to protect coral reefs and enhance visitor safety	Completed

Evidence

Overall, the action was assessed as **completed**. The desktop review identified evidence of infrastructure delivered at key sites. However, stakeholder feedback on the efficacy of the infrastructure in improving reef protection and visitor safety was mixed.

Evidence from desktop review:

The Australian Marine Park Infrastructure Register reports on infrastructure, maintenance and notes on instalment and removal of infrastructure in the Temperate East Network at key visitor sites for the purpose of protecting reefs and enhancing visitor safety.[184]

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholder feedback on this action was mixed. One stakeholder expressed high satisfaction with improvements to infrastructure, highlighting positive developments. However, another stakeholder questioned whether the replacement of moorings had effectively contributed to environmental protection, particularly in supporting seagrass recovery.

Action	Completion status
A51. Collaborate with and support other agencies that undertake invasive and protected species management and marine debris removal. For example, this may include working in partnership with relevant agencies to foster high standards of biosecurity, particularly in sensitive marine ecosystems and World Heritage-listed areas of the Lord Howe Marine Park	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed** and having been done so in a timely manner, with outputs reported between 2019 and 2022. However, no further evidence was identified for subsequent years of the plan. Although stakeholders shared positive examples, the absence of additional evidence made it challenging to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness of joint programs addressing invasive and protected species management throughout the duration of the plan.

Evidence from desktop review:

The *'Temperate East Foundation Phase Review'* which detailed:[185]

[184] *MPA Infrastructure Register of Infrastructure: Internal document*
[185] *Temperate East Network Management Plan Foundation Phase Review: Internal document.*

- Marine Pest Survey of Norfolk Marine Park which involved collaborations undertaken (between DCCEEW, the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Biofouling Solutions and Aquenal) which is informing management and foster biosecurity.[186]
- Collaboration and support for the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries Lord Howe Island Marine Park (NSW DPI LHIMP) in 2019 to ensure permits were in line with NSW regulations and supported protected species management, which resulted in an update to permit conditions.
- Revision of a trip report template that is a requirement of recreational fishing permits to support protected species management, considered and updated in a TEMPAC meeting in 2020 with NSW DPI LHIMP input, and also promoted and disseminated by NSW DPI LHIMP and its managers.

In addition, evidence of collaborations in relation to marine debris removal are outlined at A48.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholders predominantly reported positive examples of Parks Australia's collaboration with agencies to undertake invasive and protected specifies management, citing partnerships Parks had with the Australian Maritime and Fisheries Academy and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

While one stakeholder reported that greater effort/ support by Parks Australia to conduct aerial surveillance to monitor illegal fishing was required, no further feedback pertaining to the overall effectiveness of joint programs was provided.

Action	Completion status
A52. Work with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, to respond to environmental incidents and accidents	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

This action was assessed as being **partially completed**. Ongoing joint incident responses were actioned in collaboration with other Commonwealth, State and Territory government agencies, as well as Norfolk Island Regional Council when appropriate. However, there was limited evidence pertaining to Parks Australia's work with the Lord Howe Island Board.

Evidence from desktop review:

As evidenced through the AMP-wide Incident and Exercise Register, a whole-of-government training exercise was conducted.[187] Evidence of these responses were supported by news publications in 2020 about a collaborative response to unexploded ordinance in Middleton Reef,

[186] *Norfolk Marine Park Invasive Marine Species Survey Report: https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/final-report-norfolk-marine-park-invasive-marine-species-ims-survey-june2022.pdf*
[187] *AMP Incident and Exercise Register: Internal document.*

and a Facebook post in 2020 about a grant provided to the Norfolk Island Regional Council to support the cessation of waste dumping.[188] [189]

Evidence from engagement:

Two stakeholders reported that general protections for marine parks in the Temperate East had improved significantly in recent years. One stakeholder, in particular, noted that issues or incidents within the network were addressed collaboratively, effectively and promptly, citing examples such as the discovery and resolution of an unexploded ordnance (i.e. live military explosives or ammunition that failed to function).

Action	Completion status
A53. Collaborate with Traditional Owners and First Nations Ranger groups to undertake management actions	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

This action was assessed as **partially completed**, with some evidence of collaboration. However, feedback suggested that First Nations partners generally did not feel adequately involved in management actions.

Evidence from desktop review:

- Through the desktop review, communiqués were identified which reported a number of activities undertaken in collaboration with Traditional Owners, including producing Sea Country education resources in 2020 and 2023 and surveying recreational boaters and their perceptions of management in marine parks – as outlined in Action 20.[190] [191] Communiqués also showed involvement of the Gumbaynggirr Ranger Program in the TEMPAC meeting, including reports of their management activities in the Coffs Harbour area. However, evidence of management actions conducted in collaboration with Traditional Owners and First Nations Ranger groups was not identified.
- Collaborative projects were also identified as part of A22.

Evidence from engagement

Stakeholders outlined that Traditional Owners and First Nations people have been engaged in various projects in Coffs Harbour and Yamba. However, it was unclear whether these engagements demonstrated collaboration to implement management actions under the park protection and management program. Other stakeholders also noted that collaboration with Traditional Owner

[188] *Defence news publication: https://www.defence.gov.au/news-events/news/2020-10-12/clearance-divers-remove-ordnance-from-reef*
[189] *Norfolk Island Tourism Facebook post: https://www.facebook.com/norfolkislandtourism/posts/norfolk-island-awarded-marine-park-grantnorfolk-island-regional-council-nirc-hav/4832619183476167/*
[190] *TEMPAC Meeting #3 Communiqué: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/402a7d0c2992b2d496f28a6637da0f02/amp-document-tempac-meeting-three-communique.pdf*
[191] *TEMPAC Meeting #9 Communiqué: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/1acda7ad7df74202202873e5f1241b53/temp-communique-meeting-9.pdf*

and First Nations Ranger groups had not been sufficient, highlighting the need for broader engagement and increased staffing to support efforts to co-conduct management actions.

Feedback from First Nations partners in relation to collaboration was mixed, with two out of three First Nations partners reporting negative experiences in relation to collaboration with Parks Australia when undertaking management actions. Refer to stakeholder feedback as outlined in Action 22.

10. Findings: Compliance Program

*This chapter presents assessments of the implementation of the **Compliance Program** of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan.*

10.1. Overall findings about the efficacy of program implementation

Grade

Good

Overall, the grade for the actions in the **Compliance Program** was assessed as 'good'.

Of the outcomes of the management program, two were assessed to be 'fully' or 'substantially' met, and two were assessed as 'partially met'. However, low levels of non-compliance based on available data suggests strong performance overall.

Of the six planned actions, four were assessed as 'completed' or 'ongoing' and two were assessed as 'partially completed'. Positive stakeholder feedback was also provided.

Strengths and achievements

The evaluation identified a range of strengths and achievements in relation to the Compliance Program, including:

- **Communication and education activities to support compliance amongst marine park users** – recreational fishing stakeholders felt that there had been substantial efforts undertaken to educate fishers on marine park zones, permitted activities and other compliance requirements, and felt that voluntary compliance amongst recreational fishers was likely to be high as a result.
    - However, some conservation stakeholders reported a perception that recreational fishers did not have a good understanding of the zones and zone boundaries more broadly across the Temperate East Marine Park network, and that this could be leading to instances of accidental non-compliance.
- **Use of new technologies to support compliance** – including the implementation of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) for all commercial vessels operating in or transiting through Australian Marine Parks (AMPs), which stakeholders reported had been highly effective in supporting compliance among commercial marine park users. In addition, the trial and subsequent use of 'Bluebottles' (i.e. autonomous vessels used to detect illegal fishing activity) was felt to present a promising opportunity for the use of innovative technologies to support compliance across the network.
- **Effective collaborations with other Commonwealth agencies to support compliance** – with stakeholders reporting that collaborations with the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA), the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the Australian Border Force had been particularly effective in monitoring and enforcing instances of non-compliance across the Temperate East.

Barriers, challenges and limiting factors

However, some challenges and barriers were also identified by stakeholders, including:

- **Challenges of enforcement in offshore parks** – the remote and expansive nature of many of the marine parks in the Temperate East was found to create practical challenges for compliance,

monitoring and enforcement activities. Large geographic distances, limited on-water presence, and resource constraints could reduce the visibility of non-compliant activities and limit Parks Australia's ability to consistently monitor park usage.

- **Limited available data to measure some intended outcomes** – there was limited evidence of data collection and analysis to support measurement of outcomes related to awareness of marine park rules, levels of voluntary compliance and a decrease in non-compliance over the more recent years of the plan. Additionally, stakeholders acknowledged difficulties associated with measuring rates of 'voluntary' compliance, as it was felt to be challenging to accurately understand what park user behaviours would have been in the absence of regulations.
- **Complexities in collaborating with Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Islands** – the evaluation found limited evidence demonstrating direct collaboration with the Norfolk Island Regional Council and Lord Howe Island Board in relation to compliance activities, indicating that this is an area where further progress may be required.
- **The range of government departments and agencies responsible for marine compliance** – Parks Australia staff noted that Parks Australia was not solely or primarily responsible for some elements of compliance and enforcement in marine parks. For example, deterrence and penalties for illegal foreign fishing were noted as being the responsibility of the Australian Boarder Force (ABF) and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). As such, it was felt that achievement of some outcomes in this management program area were not possible for Parks Australia to achieve alone.

10.2. Outcome effectiveness

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O12. Improved user awareness of marine park rules	Partially met	Trend stable
Evidence		

Based on the available evidence, the evaluation assessed this outcome as being **partially met**. A range of compliance communication and education activities were identified through the desktop review and stakeholder consultations. However, the evaluation was unable to identify any data to assess the effectiveness of these activities or any associated changes in user awareness of marine park rules.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified a number of communication and engagement activities undertaken by Parks Australia to promote understanding of marine park rules and how to comply, as outlined in A57. While these should go some way to improving user awareness of marine park rules, ultimately the desktop review did not identify any data which evaluated the effectiveness of these communication activities or measured changes in user awareness over time.

Evidence from engagement:

In addition to the evidence presented in A57 (below), some stakeholders reported that they felt there was likely to be improved awareness of marine park rules amongst users as a result of the communication and engagement activities undertaken by Parks Australia. However, stakeholders also reported that the lack of data collected on awareness of marine park rules amongst users made it difficult to assess whether user awareness of marine park rules had quantifiably improved

over the life of the plan. In addition, stakeholders reported that low overall awareness of AMPs amongst recreational users could be indicative of similarly low awareness of AMP rules amongst these users.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O13. Increased levels of voluntary compliance and self-regulation by marine park users	Substantially met	Trend stable

Evidence

Based on the available evidence, the evaluation assessed this outcome as **substantially met** based on the low numbers of non-compliance incidents identified in the desktop review and positive feedback from stakeholders.

Evidence from desktop review:

The review identified high overall levels of compliance by marine park users, as outlined further in O14 (below). While this likely suggests that voluntary compliance was therefore high over the course of the management, the review was unable to identify any data which specifically measured or tracked levels of voluntary compliance and self-regulation by park users over time.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholders also reported that they felt there were generally high levels of voluntary compliance and self-regulation amongst marine park users, based on their observations of low levels of non-compliance incidents across the network. However, some stakeholders (including Parks Australia staff) reported that this outcome was hard to accurately assess as it was difficult or impossible to measure the number of marine park users who chose to *not* undertake an illegal activity, or those who were non-compliant without being detected.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O14. High overall levels of compliance with the rules by marine park users	Fully met	Trend stable

Evidence

The evaluation assessed this outcome as **fully met** based on desktop review evidence of low non-compliance and positive stakeholder feedback.

Evidence from desktop review:

The review identified evidence of low levels of non-compliance across the marine park network, including:

- AMP compliance reports, which illustrated relatively consistently low numbers of non-compliance incidents in the Temperate East Network.[192]
- The 2022-2024 '*Treatment Progression Register*', which provides comprehensive documentation of compliance activities undertaken across all marine park networks.[193]
- Parks Australia incident data.

Evidence from engagement:

Most stakeholders reported that overall levels of compliance with marine park rules were high amongst themselves and other park users they knew/ in their networks.

Outcome	Outcome effectiveness	Trend rating
O15. A decrease in the number of non-compliances	Partially met	Trend stable

Evidence

Based on the identified evidence, the evaluation assessed this outcome as **partially met**. While stakeholders felt that compliance and enforcement efforts were likely to have supported a reduction in non-compliances, a stable trend was identified in the available data.

Evidence from desktop review:

As discussed in O14 (above), the evaluation found that there were relatively consistent numbers of non-compliance incidents in the Temperate East Network , with no evidence of a decrease.[194] Given that incidents were low throughout the management plan, it is noted that further reductions may be challenging to achieve.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholders reported that they felt that the number of non-compliance incidents was likely to be low and/ or have decreased due to the increased number and efficiency of compliance surveillance and monitoring activities across the network. In particular, stakeholders reported that the introduction of the VMS had been highly effective in reducing the number of non-compliance incidents (i.e. trawling) amongst commercial fishing vessels over the life of the plan.

In the absence of data, most stakeholders were also unsure about the completion of this outcome. However, some Parks Australia staff raised concerns about the validity of this outcome measure, highlighting that a reduction in recorded non-compliances does not necessarily indicate improved compliance. Instead, it could reflect less effective monitoring and enforcement efforts. For example, an increase in identified non-compliance incidents may result from enhanced surveillance and detection activities, rather than an actual rise in non-compliant behaviour.

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[192] *Compliance program: webpage. https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/compliance-program/*

[193] *2022-2024 FY Treatment Progression Register: Internal document*

[194] *Compliance program: webpage. https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/compliance-program/*

10.3. Specific management plan actions

The tables below present the completion status and supporting evidence collected during the evaluation for each management plan action within the Compliance Program.

Action	Completion status
A54. Apply a risk-based approach to compliance planning, targeted enforcement and compliance auditing	**Ongoing**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **ongoing**. Considerable documentary evidence of the development and application of a risk-based approaches to compliance planning, enforcement and auditing was identified. However, scope for improvement was identified in relation to the timeliness and consistency of activities.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified a number of activities undertaken over the course of the management plan to achieve this action. These suggest that a risk-based approach to compliance planning, consultation and data informed compliance plans have been undertaken throughout the life of the plans. However, the evaluation also found that the consistency of published compliance reporting could be enhanced to support compliance measurement and transparency throughout the plan period.

More specifically, the desktop review identified the following evidence of the development of a risk-based approach to compliance and use of this approach in compliance planning:

- The '*Temperate East Marine Parks Network Compliance Plan*' for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years, which describes the nature and scope of compliance activities to be undertaken in this time including an outline of the risk-based approach taken to compliance activities.[195]
- The 2024 internal document '*Australian Marine Parks Internal procedure: Compliance Risk Assessments (Marine)'* which outlines the methodology for compliance risk assessments and evaluation. In particular, this document provides a detailed outline of the intended methodology for applying risk analysis to compliance activities. Additionally, outlining the process for compliance evaluation is likely to support in compliance auditing activities.[196]
- The 2024 internal document '*Australian Marine Parks Internal Procedure: Marine Compliance Operations Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)'*, which consolidates all marine park compliance procedures, including specific guidance on how to deal with specific compliance issues or tasks.[197]
- The '*Australian Marine Park Enforcement Guidelines*' (2025), which outline the process for assessing, investigating and responding to reported non-compliance incidents.[198] These enforcement guidelines aim to assist in the decision-making process for the Authorisations

[195] *Temperate East Marine Parks Network Compliance Plan 2024/25 & 2025/26: Internal document*
[196] *Australian Marine Parks Internal procedure: Compliance Risk Assessments (Marine), 2024: Internal document*
[197] *Australian Marine Parks Internal Procedure: Marine Compliance Operations Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), 2024: Internal document*
[198] *Australian Marine Park Enforcement Guidelines, 2025: Internal document*

and Compliance Section of the Marine and Island Parks Branch (MIPB) in responding to reported contraventions.

- The internal document '*Director of National Parks Internal Procedure – Appointing Wardens and Rangers (Marine and Terrestrial)*' which outlines the expected regulatory capabilities of Wardens and Rangers and minimum required qualifications to ensure they are able to meet these capabilities.[199]

The desktop review also identified the following evidence of a risk-based approach being applied in targeted enforcement activities:

- The 2024 internal document '*Australian Marine Parks Temperate East Targeted Compliance Operation Order*' which outlined a planned targeted compliance operation. This document outlined the risk-based approach taken to planning the targeted compliance operation, and includes an itinerary and schedule for the planned operation.[200]
- The establishment of a telephone hotline and email address to enable marine park users to report suspicious or illegal activity, thereby supporting targeted enforcement in response to these reports.[201]
- The 2022-2024 RA Treatment Progression Register, which provides comprehensive documentation of compliance treatments undertaken across all marine park networks.[202]

Action	Completion status
A55. Collaborate with Australian, state and territory government agencies by sharing assets and information	Ongoing

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **ongoing**. Clear documentary evidence of timely and consistent collaborations was identified, and feedback from most stakeholders was positive.

Evidence from desktop review:

Overall, the desktop review identified adequate evidence of collaborations with Australian, state and territory organisations to share assets and information in support of compliance. Commencement of these activities in the first few years of the management plan (i.e. as early as 2020) and evidence of continuing agreements also showed that these activities have been completed in a timely and consistent manner.

More specifically, the desktop review identified the following contracts, agreements or collaborations with Australian, state and territory government agencies:

[199] *Director of National Parks Internal Procedure - Appointing Wardens and Rangers (Marine and Terrestrial): Internal document*
[200] *Australian Marine Parks Temperate East Targeted Compliance Operation Order (2024): Internal document*
[201] *Compliance program: webpage. https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/management/programs/compliance-program/*
[202] *2022-2024 FY Treatment Progression Register: Internal document*

- A signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Director of National Parks (the Director) and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) regarding the provision of aircraft to support incident monitoring and compliance surveillance in AMPs.[203]
- An activities schedule under the MOU between Parks Australia and AFMA to provide a range of services to support compliance in AMPs, including the VMS.[204]
- A signed contract between the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Director for the provision of surface vessel patrols in support of compliance efforts.[205]
- The 2022-2024 '*Treatment Progression Register*', which provides comprehensive documentation of compliance treatments undertaken across all marine park networks.[206] This includes the type and completion status of compliance treatments, as well as documentation of any collaborating agencies involved in the treatments.
- A signed collaboration deed between the Director and the NSW Department of Regional NSW, Primary Industries (Fisheries) dated 3 December 2021 which outlines a range of proposed cooperative management activities in the Temperate East Network, including in relation to compliance.[207]

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, most stakeholders felt that effective collaboration had occurred between Parks Australia and other government agencies. Specifically:

- Parks Australia staff reported that collaboration was supported by a range of processes and agreements, including:
    - **MOUs and other informal agreements** – which these stakeholders reported were critical given that Parks Australia did not have a physical presence in each marine park network. Specifically, Parks Australia staff cited formal MOUs with various fisheries management agencies, the national VMA group, Maritime Border Command and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), as well as an informal agreement with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GRBMPA). A partnership/ contract with a private company was also referenced as key to supporting compliance operations via 'Bluebottle' operations.
    - **Collaborative and comprehensive risk assessment processes** – Parks Australia staff reported that consultation with internal and external stakeholders was undertaken every two years to assess and understand relevant risks for the Temperate East Network. The compliance and strategy teams were reported to use the findings from these consultations to guide their work, with bi-monthly meetings in place to support ongoing implementation.
- External stakeholders identified effective examples of collaboration with the AFMA, as well as with community organisations on Norfolk Island that supported compliance activities.

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[203] *Memorandum of understanding about the provision of aircraft on an opportunity basis between the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Director of National Parks (2020): Internal document*
[204] *AFMA VMA MoU Activity Schedule for 2024/25 and 2025/26 FYs: Internal document*
[205] *Collaboration deed for activities in support of cooperative management of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network and NSW marine parks, 2022: Internal document*
[206] *2022-2024 FY Treatment Progression Register: Internal document*
[207] *Collaboration deed for activities in support of cooperative management of the Temperate East Marine Parks Network and NSW marine parks: Internal documents*

Action	Completion status
A56. Investigate the use of new technologies and warning systems to assist in the detection of potential illegal activities	Completed

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**, as the desktop review identified consistent evidence of new technologies and warning systems being investigated over the course of the plan.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review showed that new technologies and warning systems had been investigated, trialled or implemented consistently over the course of the plan, with activities largely taking place between 2021 and 2024. Specifically, the following evidence was identified:

- Implementation of the VMS, which is now required to be installed on all commercial fishing vessels and communicates satellite networks to land-based receiving stations. The unit transmits data on vessel location, course, and speed, providing real time information on commercial fishing activities to vessels and marine park compliance teams. From 1 July 2024, VMS units were mandatory for all commercial vessels.[208]
- Implementation of an alert service in partnership with AFMA. This alert service is a free service tool that will send an alert via email to an onboard computer and/or an SMS message to a nominated phone.[209]
- A trial of 'Bluebottles' – that is, autonomous vessels that can monitor areas using day/ night infrared cameras, radar and satellite communication, to monitor marine park areas for non-compliant activities.[210] These vessels have subsequently been implemented to support compliance.
- A trial of acoustic recorders/ sound traps to monitor marine park areas for non-compliant activities.[211]
- A trial of uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAV), a type of drone, to monitor marine park areas for non-compliant activities.[212] [213]

[208] *VMS system monitoring: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/access-use/commercial-approvals/commercial-fishing/mandatory-vessel-monitoring-systems-vms-commercial-fishers-australian-marine-parks/*
[209] *Alert service in partnership with Australian Fisheries Management Authority: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/alert-service/*
[210] *'Bluebottles to sting illegal fishers in Australian Marine Parks' (2021): Webpage https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/news/bluebottles-sting-illegal-fishers-australian-marine-parks/*
[211] *'New technology to monitor Australian marine parks' (2022): Webpage https://minister.dcceew.gov.au/plibersek/media-releases/new-technology-monitor-australian-marine-parks*
[212] *Australian Marine Parks drone trial project plan (2021): Internal document*
[213] *'Australian Marine Park Surveillance RPAS' (2023): Webpage https://hoveruav.com.au/resource-centre/australian-marine-park-surveillance/*

Action	Completion status
A57. Work with marine park users to promote understanding of the rules for activities and how to comply	Completed

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **completed**. Consistent documentary evidence of communication to promote understanding of rules and desired compliance behaviours was identified, and most stakeholders felt that communication had been effective. However, there was limited stakeholder feedback in relation to the engagement of marine park users to promote understanding.

Evidence from desktop review:

The desktop review identified a range of activities undertaken to promote marine park rules and how to comply amongst marine park users, which were shown to be undertaken consistently throughout the life of the management plan. Specifically, these included:

- A factsheet published by Parks Australia about the Temperate East Network Management Plan in 2018, including an overview of the rules for various activities with links directing readers to more detailed further information.[214]
- A mailout sent to tourism operators in the Temperate East Network to inform them about the new management plan.[215] This document also provided an overview of compliance requirements and directed marine park users to more comprehensive information about the laws.
- A communication strategy outlining how Parks Australia will communicate with marine park users about a specific 'compliance blitz' undertaken in the Solitary Islands and Cod Groups Marine parks in January 2025.[216] This strategy includes information about the target audiences for communication about compliance, key talking points and specific communication activities to be undertaken as part of the strategy.
- A factsheet about AMPs and permitted activities for commercial fishers developed by Parks Australia.[217]
- A document outlining permitted petroleum activities in Australian Marine Parks, prepared by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) in collaboration with Parks Australia.[218] This document was published in 2020.

[214] *Temperate East Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018 zoning and rules: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/6b6ba5f853ce35407fc5cfb514e8d682/amp-document-factsheet-temperate-east-management-plan.pdf*

[215] *Charter fishing and tourism in the Temperate East Marine Parks network*

[216] *Compliance education for the Temperate East Marine Parks Network: Compliance blitz in Solitary Island and Cod Groups Marine Parks: Internal document*

[217] *Commercial fishing in Australian Marine Parks factsheet: https://australianmarineparks.gov.au/static/2c26f0c718876001f2d2cab11834e537/amp-document-commercial-fishing-factsheet.pdf*

[218] *Petroleum activities and Australian Marine Parks guidance note: https://www.nopsema.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2021-03/A620236.pdf*

Evidence from engagement:

Overall, most stakeholders for whom it was relevant felt that marine park rules and compliance requirements had been effectively communicated with marine park users, supporting the success of this action.

However, most stakeholders were unable to provide feedback in relation to how effectively Parks Australia had worked with marine park users in the development and delivery of these activities (that is, the quality or adequacy of this engagement). Nevertheless, overall positive perceptions from stakeholders in relation to this action suggest that it was completed in an appropriate manner.

More specifically, stakeholders provided the following positive examples of promotion of marine park rules and how to comply:

- **Information provided on the Parks Australia website** – e.g. downloadable maps or information in relation to the location and boundaries of different marine park zones. However, stakeholders also noted that this information could be challenging to access when on the water/ in marine parks, which presented a barrier to compliance.
- Information provided 'in-situ' in relevant locations, such as:
    - Signage and information at boat ramps and in relevant retail stores in Coffs Harbour, a common entry point for boats bound for marine parks in the Temperate East Network.
    - Signage provided on Lord Howe Island and Norfolk Island.
- **Promotion of Australian Marine Parks, including the Temperate East Network on social media** – as raising awareness of marine park values was felt to be an important element of encouraging voluntary compliance.

Action	Completion status
A58. Work with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, particularly where marine parks adjoin state marine parks, in compliance planning, including implementing actions to deter illegal activities and encourage voluntary compliance	**Partially completed or implemented**

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. While both the desktop review and stakeholder engagement identified some evidence of timely collaboration to support compliance planning and activities, this was not found to be consistent due to the limited evidence of collaboration with Norfolk Island Regional Council and Lord Howe Island Board (identified as key agencies for this action).

Evidence from desktop review:

In addition to the collaborative compliance activities identified in support of A55 above, the desktop review identified one piece of evidence of collaboration with the Norfolk Island Regional

Council – a 2023 issue of the '*Norfolk Island Government Gazette*' that outlined a new compliance order regarding prohibition of taking certain species from the marine park.[219]

However, no specific evidence was identified in relation to collaborative compliance activities with Lord Howe Island authorities or organisations.

Evidence from engagement:

In addition to the feedback in relation to collaborative compliance activities identified in support of A55 above, stakeholders also reported:

- **That collaboration was strong with both Commonwealth and state agencies** – Parks Australia staff noted that the organisation has several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with state fishery agencies to outsource compliance activities. For example, one staff member highlighted MoUs with the NSW and NT fishery agencies to utilise Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS). Other staff members mentioned strong collaboration with other Commonwealth agencies but did not provide specific examples.
- **Some partnerships with Norfolk Island authorities and organisations** – some Norfolk Island stakeholders felt that the level of collaboration was appropriate for compliance and enforcement activities in the waters immediately surrounding Norfolk Island, as the local community were felt to effectively care for the natural environment closer to the island. However, some Norfolk Island stakeholders reported a desire for greater collaboration with Parks Australia to assist with compliance and enforcement activities in waters further offshore (beyond the inshore fishery 'Box'), particularly in relation to illegal fishing and tourism activities.

Action	Completion status
A59. Collaborate with Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, in surveillance, including water and aerial patrols	Partially completed or implemented

Evidence

Overall, this action was assessed as **partially completed**. While both the desktop review and stakeholder engagement identified some evidence of timely collaboration to support surveillance activities, this was not found to be consistent due to the limited evidence of collaboration with Norfolk Island Regional Council and the Lord Howe Island Board (identified as key agencies for this action).

Evidence from desktop review:

In additional to the collaborative compliance activities identified in support of A55 above, the desktop review identified some specific examples of consistent and timely joint surveillance actions:

[219] *Norfolk Island Government Gazette No. 11, 'Prohibition on taking species in certain areas of Norfolk Marine Park', published 27 February 2023: https://www.nirc.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/your-council/documents/nirc-gazettes/2023_02_27_gazette_no_11.pdf*

- A range of compliance reports with data regarding how many aerial, surface and vessel patrols were completed across each AMP between 2023-2025.[220] [221] [222]
- A spreadsheet outlining all aerial and surface patrols which have taken place in the Coral Sea Marine Park since 2018, including those undertaken in collaboration with GBRMPA.[223]

However, no specific evidence in relation to surveillance activities undertaken in collaboration with Norfolk Island or Lord Howe Island authorities or organisations was identified.

Evidence from engagement:

Stakeholder views in relation to this action were mixed. A couple of stakeholders were aware of collaboration to support water and aerial surveillance patrols, particularly with Commonwealth agencies.

However, one stakeholder felt that the benefits of these activities were low, compared with the financial cost. As outlined in relation to A58 above, some partnerships with Norfolk Island authorities were also identified, but there was desire for greater surveillance activities in the outer waters of the Norfolk Marine Park.

[220] *Quarterly Compliance Report July, August and September 2023: Internal document*
[221] *2024/2025 Compliance Operations Annual Summary': Internal document*
[222] *Monthly Compliance Report November 2025: Internal document*
[223] *Coral Sea Marine Park surveillance and patrol spreadsheet: Internal document*

11.Conclusion

The evaluation of the Temperate East Network Management Plan highlighted **notable progress in implementing actions and achieving intended outcomes** across its seven management programs. **Strengths** included the development of robust frameworks and policies, significant ecological baseline data collection, and effective compliance and enforcement activities. Collaborations with some stakeholders, including the science community and government agencies, were identified as key drivers of success. However, **challenges** such as the remote nature of parks, insufficient engagement with First Nations peoples, and challenges balancing the protection of ecological, social and economic values limited overall implementation effectiveness.

More specifically, the evaluation established the following grades for management programs within the Temperate East Network Management Plan:

- **'Good'** – assigned to the **'Assessments and Authorisations' and 'Compliance' management programs**. Strong results in these programs were supported by the development of a range of policies, processes and procedures to support management activities and the application of tailored and flexible approaches where relevant.
- **'Good with some concerns'** – assigned to the **'Communications, Education and Awareness', 'Marine Science' and 'Parks Protection and Management' management programs.** While each of these programs had key strengths that supported effective implementation of many of the planned actions and outcomes, barriers, challenges and/ or other limiting factors were identified for each which should be considered when designing and implementing future management plans.
- **'Significant concerns'** – assigned to the **'Tourism and Visitor Experience' and 'Indigenous Engagement' management programs.** While some progress was made in these programs, key challenges and limitations were identified in each. The 'Tourism and Visitor Experience' program area, for example, was found to lack relevance to many of the marine parks within the Temperate East Network, which had constrained implementation. For the 'Indigenous Engagement' program, inclusive collaboration with all relevant Traditional Owners was identified as a challenge, highlighting the need for more structured engagement and partnership approaches. Additionally, the application of best-practice co-design approaches was recommended to ensure early engagement and to create opportunities for broader community involvement.

A range of **key learnings and recommendations for the development of the future Temperate East Network Management Plan has been identified** and should be considered in the Management Plan Review Process. These are detailed in Chapter 3 of this report. Specific findings in relation to the **strengths and weaknesses of each management program** area also provide insight into how to **maximise the effectiveness of implementation** for the next Temperate East Network Management plan, and should be considered where actions and outcomes remain consistent. These are outlined in Chapters 4-10 of this report.

APPENDIX A: Performance assessment tools

Completion status categories (at the individual action level)

Completed	Ongoing	Implemented with modifications	Partially completed or implemented	Not commenced
Action was specific and has been fully implemented as described.	Action is an ongoing requirement that has been consistently implemented as described.	Action has been fully implemented, but in a way other than was described in the plan.	Action has been partially implemented but is not yet complete as per the description in the plan.	No progress has been made against the action.

Implementation effectiveness rating categories at the management program level

Grade	Threshold
Good	Management actions and outcomes have been largely delivered as planned, with no significant gaps; or Management is efficient and effective due to adequate enabling services being in place; and Targets for at least three-quarters of stakeholder feedback performance measures have been fully or substantially met.
Good with some concerns	Most management actions and outcomes have been delivered as planned but some important actions were not delivered; or Some management activities are not adequate, leading to decreased efficiency or effectiveness; and Targets for at least half of stakeholder feedback performance measures have been fully or substantially met.
Significant concerns	Some aspects of management plan actions and outcomes have been adequately delivered, but many important actions have not been fully delivered; or Some enabling management activities are adequate, yet many are not, leading to substantially reduced efficiency or effectiveness; and/or Targets for between a quarter and a half of stakeholder feedback performance measures have been fully or substantially met.
Critical	Failure to deliver most planned management actions and outcomes; or Many management actions are not adequate, leading to greatly reduced efficiency or effectiveness; and/or Targets for less than a quarter of stakeholder feedback performance measures have been fully or substantially met.

Unknown	There is insufficient information or data available to make a judgement.

Outcome effectiveness rating categories

Grade	Result
Fully met	All of the success measures/targets were fully met.
Substantially met	All of the success measures/targets were fully or substantially met.
Partially met	Half of the success measures/targets were fully or substantially met or most/all of the measures/targets were at least partially met.
Not met	At best, half or less than half of the success measures/targets were partially met.
Unknown	There is insufficient information or data available to make a judgement.

Trend rating categories (outcomes)

Trend	Threshold
Trend stable	There has been no change in the status of this matter over the life of this plan.
Trend getting worse	There has been a negative trend in the status of this matter over the life of this plan.

↑ **Trend getting better**	There has been a positive trend in the status of the matter over the life of this plan.

Stakeholder engagement metrics

Stakeholder engagement metrics are proposed as a key measurement to determine performance against management plan actions and outcomes.

The ORIMA team will produce a stakeholder engagement plan and collect qualitative feedback from a range of relevant stakeholders about the extent to which actions and outcomes have been implemented or achieved. Stakeholder responses will be aggregated, with the approximate proportion of stakeholders who consider key outputs or outcomes to have been effectively implemented or achieved summarised as shown below.

Most – More than three quarters of stakeholders consulted

Many – More than half of the stakeholders consulted

Some – Around a third of the stakeholders consulted

A few – Less than a quarter of stakeholders consulted

APPENDIX B: Performance Information Matrix

Performance Information Matrix – Temperate East Marine Parks Network

Type (action or outcome)	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Target/ measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)
	Management Plan Actions and Outcomes	*Outputs to achieve actions*	*Criteria for success*	*Evidence of success*	*Data sources for measuring indicators*
Management program – Communication, Education and Awareness					
Management Plan Actions	A1. Develop a marketing and communication strategy for Australian Marine Parks to raise awareness and understanding of marine park values and the contribution marine parks make to enhancing Australia's wellbeing	• Marketing and communication strategy developed. • Communication products developed in accordance with strategy. • Communication activities/ initiatives undertaken in accordance with strategy.	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner. • Most key stakeholders assess that marketing and communication has been effective in increasing awareness and understanding of marine parks and their values among key audiences.	• Documentary evidence of development and implementation of marketing and communications strategy. • Key stakeholder feedback concerning the effectiveness of marketing and communication.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A2. Develop online information resources to facilitate awareness of marine park values, management arrangements and visitor opportunities	• Online information resources developed that address awareness of marine park values; management arrangements; and visitor opportunities.	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders assess that online information resources have been effective in addressing key information components.	• Documentary evidence that the developed information resources cover the key information components. • Key stakeholder feedback concerning the effectiveness of	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Type (action or outcome)	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Target/ measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)
				online information resources.	
	A3. Maximise the use of new technologies and partnerships (including with schools, universities, museums and non-government organisations) to inspire people of all ages to become involved in marine park management and protection	• Education partnerships with schools, universities, museums and non-government organisations. • Use of new technologies in partnerships.	• Whether partnerships have been established. • New technologies have been integrated into partnership opportunities where possible. • Most key stakeholders express that partnerships and use of technology have been effective in inspiring people of all ages to become involved in marine park management and protection.	• Documentary evidence that partnerships have been established. • Documentary evidence of the adoption/ use of new technologies. • Key stakeholder feedback concerning the effectiveness of partnerships and use of technology.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A4. Establish network advisory committees to ensure users and interested stakeholders have on-going input into the management of Australian Marine Parks (to be assessed together with Activity 8 below – same assessment criteria)	• Establishment and operation of the Temperate East Marine Parks Advisory Committee (TEMPAC).	• Timely establishment of the Australian Marine Parks Advisory Committee (AMPAC).	• Documentary evidence to show establishment and operation of AMPAC.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Type (action or outcome)	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Target/ measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)
		• Effective operation of the TEMPAC.	• Most AMPAC members express that they have had ongoing input into the management of the marine park. • Most AMPAC members and Parks Australia staff express satisfaction with the AMPAC's effectiveness in supporting the implementation of the management plan.	• Feedback from AMPAC members and Parks Australia staff.	
	A5. Develop a customer focussed approach to tracking the aspirations and concerns of stakeholders in relation to marine parks	• Strategy developed for tracking aspirations and concerns of stakeholders in relation to marine parks.	• Whether strategy development is complete and tracking is in place. • Most key stakeholders express that their aspirations and concerns have been considered over the course of the plan.	• Documentary evidence of strategy development and ongoing tracking. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A6. Develop information on marine parks to encourage increased awareness and understanding	• Information developed with the aim of increasing awareness	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of	• Administrative data/ desktop review.

Type (action or outcome)	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Target/ measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)
	of values and management arrangements (to be evaluated together with Activities 1 and 2 above)	and understanding of marine park values and management arrangements. • Viewership or readership of media outputs.	• Most key stakeholders consider that information has been effective in increasing awareness and understanding of marine park values and management arrangements.	information developed. • Key stakeholder feedback concerning the effectiveness of outputs in encouraging increased awareness and understanding of marine park values and management arrangements.	• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A7. Provide infrastructure in and adjacent to the Network, such as signs and marker buoys, to increase understanding of marine park values and rules, particularly at sites that are regularly visited	• Infrastructure developed with the aim of increasing awareness and understanding of marine park values and rules, particularly at regularly visited sites.	• Infrastructure has been installed in regularly visited sites. • Most key stakeholders assess infrastructure as being effective in increasing understanding of marine park values and rules.	• Documentary evidence to show extent of infrastructure provision in and adjacent to the marine park. • Documentary evidence that infrastructure has been installed in regularly visited areas. • Key stakeholder feedback concerning the effectiveness of new infrastructure in increasing understanding of	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Type (action or outcome)	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Target/ measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)
				marine park values and rules.	
	A8. Establish a Temperate East Network Advisory Committee/s or other engagement mechanisms to support and collaborate with the Director in Management (to be evaluated together with Activity 4 above – same assessment criteria)	• Establishment and operation of the TEMPAC.	• Timely establishment of the AMPAC. • Most AMPAC members consider that they have had ongoing input into the management of the marine park.	• Documentary evidence to show establishment and operation of AMPAC. • Feedback from AMPAC members and Parks Australia staff.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A9. Engage closely with Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities about marine parks and opportunities	• Engagement activities with Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities.	• Whether engagement with Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities has been conducted. • Most relevant stakeholders report that engagement about marine parks and opportunities has been effective.	• Documentary evidence demonstrating efforts to engagement with Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities. • Feedback from Norfolk Marine Park and Lord Howe Marine Park users and communities.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Management Plan Outcomes	O1. Increased awareness, understanding and support for marine parks	• N/A	• Survey-based metrics show an increase in public awareness, understanding and support for the plan. • Most stakeholders report that	• Relevant survey questions addressing awareness, understanding and support. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• National Environmental Science Program (NESP) 2021 boat ramp surveys (awareness of AMPs) and more recent

			awareness, understanding and support for the marine park has increased within their networks/ organisations/ interest groups.		surveys (repeat survey currently in field). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
Management Plan Outcomes	O1. Increased awareness, understanding and support for marine parks	• N/A	• Survey-based metrics show an increase in public awareness, understanding and support for the plan. • Most stakeholders report that awareness, understanding and support for the marine park has increased within their networks/ organisations/ interest groups.	• Relevant survey questions addressing awareness, understanding and support. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• National Environmental Science Program (NESP) 2021 boat ramp surveys (awareness of AMPs) and more recent surveys (repeat survey currently in field). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)/ collection method(s)
Management program – Tourism and visitor experience					
Management Plan Actions	A10. Develop a sustainable tourism and visitor experience strategy for Australian Marine Parks	• Sustainable tourism and visitor experience strategy developed.	• Completion of strategy in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of strategy development.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)/ collection method(s)
	A11. Work with national, state and local tourism authorities and operators to maximise the value of sustainable ecotourism opportunities associated with marine parks	• Partnership arrangements and collaboration initiatives established with tourism authorities and operators to maximise sustainable ecotourism opportunities.	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner. • Most key stakeholders feel there has been an increase in the value of sustainable ecotourism experiences over the life of the plan.	• Documentary evidence of working with national/ state/ local authorities and operators. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A12. Develop a commercial tourism authorisation system to encourage best-practice and eco-accredited businesses operating in Australian Marine Parks	• Commercial tourism authorisation system developed. • Authorisations granted to operators in accordance with system.	• Completion of system in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders feel the system encourages best-practice and eco-accredited businesses operating in Australian Marine parks.	• Documentary evidence of the commercial tourism authorisation system. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (system documentation and authorisation records).
	A13. Work with Tourism Australia and state and regional tourism authorities and the fishing industry to market and promote Australian Marine Parks, including opportunities to promote locally and sustainably caught seafood	• Delivery of marketing assets showcasing and promoting Australian Marine Parks and locally and sustainably caught seafood. • Collaborations with Tourism Australia and state and regional tourism authorities	• Outputs delivered in a timely and consistent manner. • Most key stakeholders feel marketing assets have been effective in promoting marine parks and locally and sustainably caught seafood.	• Documentary evidence of production of marketing assets relating to marine parks and locally and sustainably caught seafood (including reach of these). • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (marketing/ promotion analytics and data.) • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)/ collection method(s)
		and the fishing industry.			
	A14. Monitor visitor trends and levels of satisfaction with marine park experiences and products	• Visitor trend monitoring implemented. • Levels of satisfaction with marine park experiences and products monitored.	• Ongoing and comprehensive monitoring undertaken regarding visitor trends and satisfaction with marine park experiences and products.	• Documentary evidence of visitor numbers being recorded over time. • Visitor satisfaction trends of experiences and products recorded (either quantitatively and/ or qualitatively).	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. tourism authorisation holder logbooks for levels of access to the Temperate East Marine Parks).
	A15. Promote culturally sensitive tourism by encouraging tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners	• Actions taken to encourage tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners to promote culturally sensitive tourism.	• Most operators feel they have been appropriately encouraged to engage with Traditional Owners. • Most First Nations partners feel Parks Australia has taken appropriate steps to encourage tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners.	• Documentary evidence of actions taken to encourage tourism operators to liaise with Traditional Owners to promote culturally sensitive tourism. • Feedback from Traditional Owners and tourism operators.	• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA (with tourism operators/ Traditional Owners).
	A16. Work with tourism operators and First Nations peoples to recognise and promote cultural values and cultural tourism opportunities	• Collaboration with tourism operators and First Nations peoples to promote cultural tourism opportunities.	• Most First Nations partners and Tourism industry stakeholders feel Parks Australia has taken appropriate and effective steps to	• Documentary evidence of collaboration with tourism operators and First Nations peoples to promote	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA (with First Nations

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)/ collection method(s)
			recognise and promote cultural values and cultural tourism opportunities.	cultural tourism opportunities. • Feedback from First Nations partners and tourism operators.	peoples/ Traditional Owners and other tourism operators).
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A17. Promote visitor experiences that foster curiosity and appreciation of natural and heritage values in the Network, for example nature watching, diving or snorkelling at the Norfolk, Solitary Islands, Cod Grounds and Lord Howe Marine Parks	• Promotion of visitor experiences that foster curiosity and appreciation of natural and heritage values in the marine park. • Promotional content relates to the natural and heritage value of the marine park.	• Visitor experiences relating to natural and heritage values of marine parks are promoted. • Most key stakeholders assess that this promotion is fostering curiosity and appreciation of natural and heritage values.	• Documentary evidence of promotion of visitor experiences relating to natural and heritage values of marine parks. • Feedback from stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (including visitor surveys, tourism analytics, website and social metrics). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A18. Work with other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies, and the tourism industry to support tourism initiatives, events and attractions that promote visitor experiences in marine parks	• Partnerships and collaborations with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies and the tourism industry to support tourism initiatives in the marine park.	• There has been an increase in initiatives, events and attractions that promote visitor experiences in the marine park. • Most key stakeholders assess that effective support has been provided for these initiatives,	• Documentary evidence of partnerships and collaborations with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies, and the tourism industry to support tourism. • Feedback from key stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (including visitor surveys, tourism datasets, website and social metrics). • Stakeholder engagement (Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies and the tourism

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source(s)/ collection method(s)
			events and attractions.		industry) conducted by ORIMA.
Management Plan Outcomes	O2. High-quality visitor experiences that are appealing, engaging and raise awareness of the natural and cultural values of marine parks	• N/A	• Visitors to the marine park report high-quality experiences. • Visitors report an increased awareness of the natural and cultural values of marine parks. • Most relevant stakeholders report that visitor experiences delivered are appealing, engaging and raise awareness of the natural and cultural values of marine parks.	• Experience and satisfaction ratings from visitors to marine parks. • Feedback from stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (including visitor surveys, tourism datasets). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O3. Increased visitation to marine parks	• N/A	• Year-on-year increase in visitation.	• Documentary evidence of visitor numbers (compared annually).	• Administrative data/ desktop review (including visitor monitoring indicators, tourism analytics).
	O4. Social and economic benefits from the contribution of marine parks to Australia's visitor economy	• N/A	• Increased economic contribution of marine park tourism. • Most stakeholders perceive social and	• Documentary evidence of economic contribution of marine park tourism.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. economic impact analysis/ tourism datasets).

			economic benefits from the contribution of marine parks to Australia's visitor economy.	• Feedback from key stakeholders.	• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
Management program – Indigenous Engagement					
Management Plan Actions	A19. Develop an Australian Marine parks First Nations engagement and cultural heritage strategy, to improve understanding of cultural heritage, link management with Sea Country plans and maximise employment and enterprise opportunities for Traditional Owners	• First Nations engagement and cultural heritage strategy developed and implemented. • Activities/ initiatives undertaken in accordance with strategy to improve understanding of cultural heritage, link management with Sea Country plans and maximise employment and enterprise opportunities for Traditional Owners.	• Strategy delivered in a timely manner. • Most First Nations partners feel strategy is aligned with Sea Country plans. • Most First Nations partners feel strategy has increased understanding of cultural heritage and employment and enterprise opportunities.	• Documentary evidence of strategy completion and implementation. • Feedback from Traditional Owners.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. economic impact analysis/ tourism datasets, grant program information). • First Nations engagement (with Traditional Owners) conducted by ORIMA.
	A20. Develop agreements to support First Nations Ranger programs to deliver management in marine parks	• Agreements established to support First Nations Ranger programs in marine parks.	• Agreements in place in timely manner. • Increasing First Nations Ranger representation in the management of marine parks.	• Documentary evidence of agreements to support First Nations Ranger programs in marine parks.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement (with First Nations Rangers, community and

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
				• Feedback from First Nations partners.	Traditional Owners) conducted by ORIMA.
	A21. Provide information to First Nations peoples about marine park management	• Information developed and shared with First Nations peoples about marine park management (e.g. newsletters, workshops, briefings).	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner. • Most First Nations partners report information has been provided in an appropriate way.	• Documentary evidence of information provision. • Feedback from First Nations partners.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement (with First Nations Rangers, First Nations community and Traditional Owners) conducted by ORIMA).
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A22. Collaborate with Traditional Owners and relevant partners such as the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council on implementing the First Nations engagement program, including supporting First Nations groups to participate in marine park management	• Collaborative initiatives undertaken to implement the First Nations engagement program, supporting First Nations groups to participate in marine park management (Traditional Owners, the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council).	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Most First Nations partners feel appropriate and effective efforts have been made to implement the First Nations engagement program.	• Documentary evidence of collaborative initiatives undertaken. • Feedback from Traditional Owners and other relevant partners such as the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement (with Traditional Owners, and relevant First Nations partners) conducted by ORIMA.
	A23. Implement cultural awareness training for Parks Australia staff in association with Traditional Owners	• Cultural awareness training delivered to Parks Australia staff in collaboration with Traditional Owners.	• Output delivered in a timely manner. • Traditional Owners feel they were appropriately involved in training.	• Documentary evidence of proportion of staff who received training. • Feedback from Traditional Owners	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. training attendance data). • First Nations engagement (with Traditional Owners)

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
				and Parks Australia Staff.	and engagement with Parks Australia staff conducted by ORIMA.
	A24. Establish protocols for researchers working with Parks Australia to guide engagement with Traditional Owners	• Protocols developed and implemented to guide researchers working with Parks Australia in engaging with Traditional Owners.	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of protocol development.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. training attendance data).
	A25. Identify opportunities and mechanisms to engage Traditional Owners including through coastal Local Aboriginal Land Councils, established under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 in the management of marine parks	• Formal identification of partnership opportunities and mechanisms for engagement of Traditional Owners and First Nations Rangers in marine park management (including Local Aboriginal Land Councils).	• Completion of outputs in a timely manner. • First Nations partners feel appropriate and adequate efforts have been made to identify opportunities and mechanisms to engage Traditional Owners and First Nations Rangers in the management of the marine park.	• Documentary Evidence of formal identification of partnership opportunities (including the provision of grants). • Feedback from Traditional Owners, First Nations Rangers and the First Nations community.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement (with First Nations Rangers, First Nations community and Traditional Owners) conducted by ORIMA.
	A26. Partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups to manage Sea Country in marine parks	• Traditional Owners and First Nations Groups have been engaged in partnerships in relevant marine park management.	• Delivery of partnerships in a timely manner. • First Nations partners feel appropriate and adequate efforts have been made to partner in management of Sea Country.	• Documentary evidence of partnerships (including the provision of grants). • Feedback from Traditional Owners and First Nations groups.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement (with Traditional Owners and First Nations groups) conducted by ORIMA.

Management Plan Outcomes	O5. Marine Park management contributes to social, cultural and economic benefits for Traditional Owners	• N/A	• Documentary evidence that the management plan contributes to social, cultural and economic benefits for Traditional Owners. • Most First Nations partners feel social/ cultural/ economic benefits have been achieved from marine park management.	• Documentary evidence. • Feedback from Traditional Owners.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Engagement with Traditional Owners conducted by ORIMA.
	O6. Increase understanding of traditional knowledge, map cultural values and manage significant sites	• N/A	• Documentary evidence of initiatives to increase traditional knowledge, map cultural values and manage significant sites. • Most First Nations partners feel efforts to increase traditional knowledge, map cultural values and manage significant sites have been sufficient.	• Documentary evidence. • Feedback from First Nations partners.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Engagement with Traditional Owners and First Nations partners conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
Management program – Marine science					
Management Plan Actions	A27. Establish ecological, social and economic baselines to support evidence-based decision-making and adaptive management	• Baseline datasets established (ecological, social, economic).	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Evidence of baselines utilisation in decision-making to support adaptive management.	• Documentary evidence of baseline datasets/ reports. • Evidence of use of datasets – including references to baseline data in decision-making.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A28. Develop an Australian Marine Parks science strategy to prioritise and encourage research and monitoring of park values, pressures and management effectiveness, and foster science communication and knowledge uptake	• Science strategy developed. • Activities/ initiatives undertaken in accordance with strategy to prioritise and encourage research and monitoring of park values, pressures and management effectiveness. • Activities/ initiatives undertaken in accordance with strategy to foster science communication and knowledge uptake.	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Strategy has been implemented over the course of the plan to prioritise research and monitoring activities across key areas. • Most stakeholders consider that research priorities align with the strategy, and that science communication and knowledge uptake have been fostered.	• Documentary evidence of marine parks science strategy. • Feedback from key stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A29. Encourage and facilitate knowledge brokering to support collaboration and partnerships with the science community, private enterprise, citizen	• Knowledge brokering activities delivered. • Collaborations and partnerships with the	• Outputs delivered consistently over the course of the plan.	• Documentary evidence that partnerships have been established (e.g.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement (with

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	science organisations and other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies	science community, private enterprise, citizen science organisations and other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies.	• Most stakeholders feel effective knowledge brokering has taken place.	collaborative knowledge sharing activities with the science community, private enterprise, citizen science organisations and other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies.) • Feedback from stakeholders.	science community, private enterprise, citizen science organisations and other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies) conducted by ORIMA.
	A30. Establish an authorisation system for scientific research and monitoring by third parties and encourage data to be made publicly available through appropriate information portals such as the Australian Ocean Data Network	• Research authorisation system developed and operational. • Data-sharing arrangements established.	• Output delivered in a timely manner. • Increased number of research projects made public.	• Documentary evidence of research authorisation system. • Documentary evidence of research projects made public.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.
	A31. Collaborate with the science community (including through the National Marine Science Plan Committee and National Environmental Science Program) and other marine park users to assist in improving the understanding of marine park values, pressures and management effectiveness	• Joint science initiatives and research collaborations delivered to assist in improving the understanding of marine park values, pressures and management effectiveness.	• Outputs delivered over the course of the plan. • Most stakeholders feel collaborations with the science community have assisted in improving the understanding of marine park values, pressures and management effectiveness.	• Documentary evidence of joint science initiatives and research collaborations. • Feedback from stakeholders (science community).	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. via research project reports). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	A32. Collaborate with the science community and other government agencies to increase the use of innovative and effective technology and systems including sensor technology	• Collaborations with the scientific community and government agencies to support the use of innovative and effective technology and systems including sensor technology.	• Most stakeholders feel collaborations with the science community have increased use of innovative and effective technologies and systems over the course of the plan. • Evidence of increased use of innovative and effective technologies and systems over the course of the plan.	• Documentary evidence of joint initiatives to increase the use of innovative and effective technology and systems including sensor technology. • Feedback from key stakeholders (science community).	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A33. Monitor social and economic uses and their benefits and impacts on marine parks in the Network	• Social and economic monitoring being conducted. • Analysis conducted on benefits and impacts.	• Output delivered in a timely and consistent manner.	• Documentary evidence of social/economic impact monitoring.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.
	A34. Monitor the condition of important habitats and their vulnerability to climate change	• Monitoring of important habitats conducted, with attention to vulnerabilities to climate change.	• Output delivered in a timely and consistent manner.	• Documentary evidence of habitat monitoring.	Administrative data/ desktop review.
	A35. Monitor the impact of invasive species on marine park values and the effectiveness of management	• Impact of invasive species on marine park values and the effectiveness of management monitored.	• Output delivered in a timely and consistent manner. • Most relevant stakeholders agree that monitoring	• Documentary evidence of invasive species monitoring. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
			programs have been supported and sustained.		
	A36. Collaborate with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board, marine park users, and the science sector to support long-term monitoring. For example, monitoring of coral reefs, protected species and effects of fishing on marine parks	• Long-term monitoring partnerships and programs with the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board, marine park users and the science sector.	• Outputs delivered and maintained over life of plan. • Most relevant stakeholders agree that collaborative long-term monitoring programs have been supported and sustained.	• Documentary evidence of monitoring partnerships. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement (with the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board and other Commonwealth and state government agencies) conducted by ORIMA.
	A37. Investigate opportunities to extend citizen science programs	• Expanded or new citizen science programs considered.	• Output delivered.	• Documentary evidence of investigations to extend citizen science programs.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.

Management Plan Outcomes	O7. Increase understanding of marine park values, pressures and adequacy of responses	• N/A	• Survey-based metrics show an increase in understanding of marine park values, pressures and adequacy of responses. • Most stakeholders report that	• Relevant survey questions addressing understanding of marine park values, pressures and adequacy of responses. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Park user surveys - National Environmental Science Program (NESP) 2021 boat ramp surveys and more recent surveys (repeat survey currently in field).

			awareness, understanding of marine park values, pressures and adequacy of responses has increased within their networks/ organisations/ interest groups.		• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O8. Improve understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values	• N/A	• Survey-based metrics show improved understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values. • Most stakeholders report an improved understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values within their networks/ organisations/ interest groups.	• Relevant survey addressing understanding of the effectiveness of marine park management in protecting park values. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Park user surveys. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O9. Informed decision-making and improved evidence-based decisions	• N/A	• Most stakeholders report informed decision-making and improved evidence-based decisions.	• Stakeholder feedback.	• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
Management program – Assessments and Authorisations					
Management Plan Actions	A38. Develop and apply best-practice approaches to regulation and decision-making in the authorisation of activities within marine parks. This includes developing policy to ensure assessment and authorisation requirements are clearly articulated and that decision making is robust, consistently applied, and transparent to all marine park users	• Regulatory policy and procedural guidance developed and implemented based on best-practice approaches. • Clear decision-making criteria established and applied (e.g. robust, consistent, transparent).	• Output delivered in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders report that decisions are robust, consistent and transparent.	• Documentary evidence of development and application of best-practice approaches to regulation and decision-making. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. regulatory policy documentation). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A39. Collaborate with industry to investigate innovative technologies and systems (including vessel monitoring systems) that can assist businesses and individuals to comply with regulatory requirements	• Investigations of innovative compliance technologies and systems to assist businesses and individuals to comply with regulatory requirements. • Collaboration initiatives with industry in relation to compliance technologies and systems.	• Outputs delivered over course of the plan. • Most stakeholders agree there has been adequate action taken to investigate innovative technologies and systems (including vessel monitoring systems) that can assist businesses and individuals to comply with regulatory requirements.	• Documentary evidence of collaborations. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. compliance data). • Stakeholder engagement (with businesses and individuals) conducted by ORIMA.
	A40. Develop an effective and efficient process to assess new technologies and gear types to allow	• Process and criteria developed for assessment of new	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of process.	• Administrative data. • Stakeholder engagement

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	for the use of new equipment during the life of this plan if appropriate	gear/ technology to be used.	• Most stakeholders express the process is effective and efficient in assessing new technologies and gear types to allow for the use of new equipment during the life of this plan.	• Stakeholder feedback.	conducted by ORIMA.
	A41. Develop a guarantee of service for the regulated community that includes a commitment to work with key marine park users and interest groups whose interests are likely to be affected by regulatory decisions	• Service guarantee developed and publicly available.	• Output delivered in a timely manner. • Most key marine park users and interest groups agree that they have been appropriately consulted regarding regulatory decisions.	• Documentary evidence of service guarantee publication. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement (marine park users and interest groups) conducted by ORIMA.
	A42. Develop a customer focused online authorisation system for marine park users that includes publishing authorisations issued by Parks Australia on its website	• Online authorisation system developed and operational. • Authorisations published online.	• Output delivered in a timely manner. • Transparent publication of all authorisations.	• Documentary evidence of system development. • Documentary evidence of authorisations published.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A43. Issue authorisations—a permit, class approval, activity licence or lease—for activities in the marine park assessed as acceptable either by the Director or another government or industry policy, plan or program accepted by the Director	• Authorisations issued for activities in the marine park that are assessed as acceptable by the Director or align with an approved	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. evidence of authorisations: permits, class

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
		government or industry policy, plan or program accepted by the Director.			approvals, activity licences or lease). • Stakeholder engagement (marine park users and interest groups) conducted by ORIMA.
	A44. Work with other Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies to improve experiences and consistency of approaches for people seeking authorisations	• Collaborations with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies to improve experiences of people seeking authorisations. • Consistent approaches achieved for authorisations.	• Output delivered. • Most relevant stakeholders believe consistency of experiences has increased.	• Documentary evidence of alignment between partner authorisation processes. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. evidence of collaboration to increase consistency of authorisation processes). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Management Plan Outcomes	O10. Assessments and authorisations ensure ongoing protection of marine park values through the management of activities in marine parks	• N/A	• Most stakeholders feel assessments and authorisations have ensured ongoing protection of marine park values through the management of activities in marine parks.	• Stakeholder feedback.	• Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
Management program – Parks protection and management					
Management Plan Actions	A45. Apply a risk-based assessment process to prioritise park protection and management actions	• Risk-based assessment process developed and applied to prioritise park protection and management actions.	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of framework development.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. risk assessment reports).
	A46. Develop an Australian Marine Parks critical incident strategy in collaboration with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and other responsible agencies to respond to critical incidents	• Critical incident strategy developed and implemented. • Collaboration with AMSA and relevant agencies established.	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of strategy completion.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. strategy documentation and incident response reports).
	A47. Develop a mooring and anchoring strategy to protect marine park values and improve visitor experience	• Mooring and anchoring strategy developed and implemented in consideration of marine park values and visitor experience.	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of strategy completion.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. strategy documentation).
	A48. Support the removal of marine debris and ghost nets from marine parks through partnerships with Commonwealth, state and territory government agencies and other organisations involved in the management of marine debris	• Marine debris partnerships and removal programs delivered.	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders believe effective collaboration achieved to support removal of marine debris and/ or ghost nets.	• Documentary evidence of collaborative initiatives or programs to support the removal of marine debris and ghost nets. • Feedback from stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. debris removal data, evidence of partnerships). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	A49. Contribute to actions, where appropriate, that support Australia's obligations under international agreements and national environmental law (e.g., World Heritage Convention, Ramsar Convention, recovery plans, wildlife conservation plans and threat abatement plans)	• Actions that support Australia's obligations under international agreements and national environmental law.	• Outputs delivered. • Most stakeholders feel appropriate actions have been taken to support Australia's obligations under international agreements and national environmental law. •	• Documentary evidence of actions taken to support Australia's obligations under international agreements and national environmental law. • Feeback from stakeholders.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. International/ national reporting documentation). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A50. Enable infrastructure such as moorings to protect coral reefs and enhance visitor safety	• Infrastructure (e.g., moorings) established and maintained.	• Outputs delivered at key visitor sites. • Most key stakeholders report improvements to reef protection and/ or visitor safety.	• Documentary evidence of infrastructure delivered. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. infrastructure records). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A51. Collaborate with and support other agencies that undertake invasive and protected species management and marine debris removal. For example, this may include working in partnership with relevant agencies to foster high standards of biosecurity, particularly in sensitive marine ecosystems and World Heritage-listed areas of the Lord Howe Marine Park	• Collaborations to support other agencies that undertake invasive and protected species management and marine debris removal.	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders express there have been effective joint programs concerning invasive and protected species management and marine debris removal.	• Documentary evidence of collaborative programs. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. program documentation). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	A52. Work with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, to respond to environmental incidents and accidents	• Joint incident responses.	• Outputs delivered in a timely manner. • Most stakeholders feel effective collaboration has taken place to respond to environmental incidents and accidents.	• Documentary evidence of joint incidence responses. • Key stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. incident reports). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A53. Collaborate with Traditional Owners and First Nations Ranger groups to undertake management actions	• Collaborative management activities implemented with Traditional Owners and First Nations Ranger groups.	• Outputs delivered. • Most Traditional Owner and First Nations Ranger partners report adequate involvement in management actions.	• Documentary evidence of collaborative management actions. • Feedback from Traditional Owners and First Nations Ranger groups.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • First Nations engagement conducted by ORIMA.

Management Plan Outcomes	O11. Impact of pressures on marine park values are minimised as far as reasonably practicable	• N/A	• Documentary evidence of minimisation of pressures on marine park values. • Most stakeholders feel the impact of pressures on marine park values has been minimised as far as reasonably practicable.	• Documentary evidence. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
Management program – Compliance					
Management Plan Actions	A54. Apply a risk-based approach to compliance planning, targeted enforcement and compliance auditing	• Risk-based compliance approach developed and applied.	• Output delivered in a timely manner.	• Documentary evidence of risk-based compliance planning, enforcement and auditing.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.
	A55. Collaborate with Australian, state and territory government agencies by sharing assets and information	• Collaborations with Australian, state and territory government agencies by sharing assets and information.	• Outputs delivered in a timely and consistent manner. • Most stakeholders report effective collaboration has occurred.	• Documentary evidence of sharing of assets and information with other government agencies (Australian and state/ territory). • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	A56. Investigate the use of new technologies and warning systems to assist in the detection of potential illegal activities	• New technologies assessed, trialled or implemented to assist in the detection of potential illegal activities.	• Outputs delivered consistently.	• Documentary evidence of assessment, trialling or implementation of new technologies to assist in the detection of potential illegal activities.	• Administrative data/ desktop review.
	A57. Work with marine park users to promote understanding of the rules for activities and how to comply	• Promotion of rules and activities relating to how to comply.	• Outputs delivered consistently. • Most relevant stakeholders feel they have been adequately engaged regarding	• Documentary evidence of efforts to work with marine park users to promote understanding of the	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
			marine park rules and how to comply.	rules for activities and how to comply. • Stakeholder feedback.	
	Actions specific to the Temperate East				
	A58. work with other Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, particularly where marine parks adjoin state marine parks, in compliance planning, including implementing actions to deter illegal activities and encourage voluntary compliance	• Joint compliance planning undertaken with focus on deterring illegal activities and encouraging voluntary compliance. • Actions Implemented towards this end.	• Outputs delivered in a timely and consistent manner. • Most stakeholders consider joint compliance planning to be effective.	• Documentary evidence of shared compliance planning. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review. • Stakeholder engagement (with the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board and other Commonwealth and state government agencies) conducted by ORIMA.

	Actions/ Outcomes	Output(s)	Measure of success	Indicator(s)	Data source
	A59. Collaborate with Commonwealth and state government agencies, the Norfolk Island Regional Council, and Lord Howe Island Board, in surveillance, including water and aerial patrols	• Joint surveillance actions, including water and aerial patrols.	• Outputs delivered in a timely and consistent manner. • Most stakeholders consider joint surveillance actions to be effective.	• Documentary evidence of joint surveillance actions, including water and aerial patrols.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. patrol logs, surveillance collaboration actions/ reports/ evidence). • Stakeholder engagement (with the Norfolk Island Regional Council, Lord Howe Island Board and other Commonwealth and state government agencies) conducted by ORIMA.

Management Plan Outcomes	O12. Improved user awareness of marine park rules	• N/A	• Survey-based metrics show an increase in awareness of marine park rules. • Most stakeholders report that awareness of marine park rules has improved. •	• Relevant survey responses addressing awareness of marine park rules. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Park user surveys - National Environmental Science Program (NESP) 2021 boat ramp surveys and more recent surveys (repeat survey currently in field). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O13. Increased levels of voluntary compliance and self-regulation by marine park users	• N/A	• Evidence of increased voluntary compliance	• Survey based metrics of voluntary compliance attitudes	• Park user surveys. • Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g.

			and self-regulation by users of marine parks. • Most stakeholders perceive voluntary compliance to have increased.	and behaviours (including self-regulation). • Documentary evidence of self-regulation. • Stakeholder feedback.	compliance monitoring records/audits). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O14. High overall levels of compliance with the rules by marine park users	• N/A	• High levels of compliance over course of plan. • Most stakeholders perceive compliance with the rules to be high.	• Survey based metrics of compliance attitudes and behaviours. • Documentary records of rates of compliance/ non-compliance (e.g. investigations). • Stakeholder feedback.	• Park user surveys. • Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. compliance monitoring records/audits). Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.
	O15. A decrease in the number of non-compliances	• N/A	• Decreasing trend in non-compliance incidents over the course of the plan. • Most stakeholders consider non-compliance to be decreasing.	• Documentary records of number of non-compliances throughout the life of the plan. • Stakeholder feedback.	• Administrative data/ desktop review (e.g. compliance monitoring records/audits). • Stakeholder engagement conducted by ORIMA.