Revised Management Plan for Antarctic Specially Protected Area No. 168 Mount Harding, Grove Mountains, East Antarctica

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ASPA No. 168 Mount Harding, Grove Mountains, East Antarctica | |
| **1. Is a new ASPA proposed?** | No |
| **2. Is a new ASMA proposed?** | No |
| **3. Does the proposal relate to an existing ASPA or ASMA?** | Yes |
| *First designation:* | Measure 2 (2008) |
| *First adoption of management plan:* | Measure 2 (2008) |
| *Any revisions to management plan:* | Measure 17 (2015) |
| *Current management plan:* | Measure 17 (2015) |
| *Any extensions of expiry dates of management plan:* | N/A |
| *Renamed and renumbered by Decision 1 (2002) as:* | ASPA No. 168 Mount Harding, Grove Mountains, East Antarctica |
| *Other relevant measures:* | N/A |
| **4. If the proposal contains a revision of an existing management plan, please indicate the types of amendment:** | |
| *(i) major or minor?* | Minor. |
| *(ii) any changes to the boundaries or co-ordinates?* | No |
| *(iii) any changes to the maps? If yes, are the changes in the captions only or also in the graphics?* | No |
| *(iv) any change to the description of the area that is relevant to identifying its location or its boundaries?* | No |
| *(v) any changes that affect any other ASPA, ASMA or HSM within this area or adjacent to it? In particular, please explain any merger with, incorporation of or abolition of any existing area or site.* | No |
| *(vi) Other - brief summary of other types of changes, indicating the paragraphs of the management plan in which these are located.* | In the Introduction section, the description of the latest visit is updated.  Twelve surveying rods for current velocity were erected in the area. Description is added in paragraph 6(iii). |
| **5. If a new ASPA or ASMA is proposed, does it contain any marine area?** | N/A |
| **6. If yes, does the proposal require the prior approval of CCAMLR in accordance with Decision 9 (2005)?** | N/A |
| **7. If yes, has the prior approval of CCAMLR been obtained?** | N/A |
| *If yes, please list the CCAMLR Final Report and Paragraph No.* | N/A |
| **8. If the proposal relates to an ASPA, what is the primary reason for designation (*i.e.*, which part under Article 3.2 of Annex V)?** | The primary reason for designation is to protect the precious physiognomies of glacier erosion preserved in the ice sheet of inland Antarctic. Under Article 3.2 of Annex V the main reasons for special protection are:  (e) areas of particular interest to on-going or planned scientific research;  (f) examples of outstanding geological, glaciological or geomorphological features;  (g) areas of outstanding aesthetic and wilderness value; |
| **9. Have you identified the main Environmental Domain represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 3 (2008))?** | Yes. Environment T –Inland continental geologic (Dronning Maud, Mac Robertson, Victoria, Oates lands, Ford Range) |
| **10. Have you identified the main Antarctic Conservation Biogeographic Region represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 3 (2017))?** | Yes. ACBR16 –Prince Charles Mountains |
| **11. Have you identified any Antarctic Important Bird Areas represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 5 (2015))?** | N/A. |

Revised Management Plan for ASPA No. 168 Mount Harding, Grove Mountains, East Antarctica

1. ASPA No. 168 Mount Harding, Grove Mountains, East Antarctica was designated through Measure 2 by the 31st ATCM in 2008. The Management Plan for ASPA No. 168 was reviewed last time in 2015, and the review therefore fell due in 2020. However, due to the pandemic of COVID-19, the investigation of Grove Mountains was delayed and the visit was recovered until February 2023 by the 39th Chinese National Antarctic Research Expedition (CHINARE). China has verified with scientists working in the Area that the values under special protection are still valid and that the measures for protection of those values are sufficient.
2. The 39th CHINARE has carried out the activities as below:：

* In the top area at the south Mount Harding, the investigations of the cold-desert soil, ventifacts, wind ridges and surrounding environment and landform were carried out.
* In the area of Kunming Lake, West Lake and Jingyu Peak at the west Mount Harding, surveys on the ice-cored moraine, ice-core pyramid, blue ice area, pool of melted water, blue ice cliff, steep rock cliff, wind-eroded ice ditch and etc. were carried out.
* UAV aerial photography was carried out in the Area.
* 12 surveying rods were erected in the Area for ice flow rate.
* A new meteorological station (72 ° 47 ′ 50.52 ″ S, 74 ° 24 ′ 20.4 ″ E) has been set up in the adjacent area outside the north boundary of the Area.

1. Comments from the scientists engaged in Mount Harding survey was requested and received, and the protected values and management procedures were reviewed and brought to up to date. The review concluded that the values of glacial erosion and wind-erosion physiognomies of the Area remain valid and the protection measures are still sufficient. No changes have been made to the boundaries of the Area. Therefore, the revisions have been classified as "minor" in nature and in effect.
2. The principal changes to the provisions of the existing Management Plan include the following elements and are shown in red words in the attached text of the revised management plan:
   1. *Introduction.* Minor update to the description of Chinese expedition to the Area.
   2. *Section 3 Maps and Photos.* Photos have been updated, including 2 photos replaced and a new photo for cold-desert soil.
   3. *Section 6 (iii) Locations of structures within and adjacent to the site.* The description of the surveying rods was added.
   4. Add photo 5 in the annex: extremely cold desert soil, and adjust the number of subsequent pictures in order.
   5. *Table 1* on the coordinates for 12 surveying rods was added in the annex.

Recommendation

The revised Management Plan is attached for consideration by the Committee for Environmental Protection for recommendation for adoption by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting.