Review of the Management Plan for Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA) No.157 Backdoor Bay, Cape Royds, Ross Island

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Working Paper submitted by New Zealand

Summary

In accordance with the Article 6.3 of Annex V to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, New Zealand has conducted a review of the Management Plan for ASPA 157: Backdoor Bay, Cape Royds, Ross Island. The review was carried out concurrently with other ASPAs in the Ross Sea that are designated for their historic values.

The review was conducted with reference to Annex V of the Protocol and the *Revised* *Guide to the Preparation of Management Plans for Antarctic Specially Protected Areas* appended to Resolution 2 (2011).

Stakeholder including Parties active in the Ross Sea region, Antarctic heritage professionals at the Antarctic Heritage Trust, and IAATO were consulted on the revisions.

The revisions are minor and outlined in the cover sheet and text below.

Recommendation

The attached revised management plan for ASPA No. 157 Backdoor Bay, Cape Royds, Ross Island is recommended for consideration by the Committee for Environmental Protection and adoption by the ATCM.

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| **ASPA No. 157 Backdoor Bay, Cape Royds, Ross Island** | |
| **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, ASPA |
| *First designation:* | Measure 1 (1998) |
| *First adoption of management plan:* | Adopted at first designation. |
| *Any revisions to management plan:* | Measure 1 (2002), Measure 2 (2005), Measure 9 (2010), Measure 12 (2015)**.** |
| *Current management plan:* | Measure 12 (2015) |
| *Any extensions of expiry dates of management plan:* | N/A |
| *Renamed and renumbered by Decision 1 (2002) as:* | N/A |
| *Other relevant measures:* | Recommendation VII-9 (1972), Decision 1 (2002), Resolution 2 (2011). |
| **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?* | Yes. Minor changes to map graphics and one new map added. |
| *(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.* | Yes. The air access provisions at ASPA No. 157 have been clarified so they are consistent with ASPA No. 121, which is adjacent. |
| *(vi) Other - brief summary of other types of changes, indicating the paragraphs of the management plan in which these are located.* | See below for summary of changes. |
| **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)?** | Annex V, Article 3.2 (h) Sites or monuments of recognised historic value. |
| **9. Have you identified the main Environmental Domain represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 3 (2008))?** | Environment S – McMurdo South Victoria Land geologic |
| **10. Have you identified the main Antarctic Conservation Biogeographic Region represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 3 (2017))?** | Region 9 – South Victoria Land |
| **11) Have you identified any Antarctic Important Bird Areas represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 5 (2015))?** | N/A |

1. ASPA No. 157 Backdoor Bay, Cape Royds, Ross Island (Historic Site and Monument (HSM) No. 15) is designated to protect the historic hut and associated artefacts from the British Antarctic *Nimrod* Expedition of 1907-09 led by Sir Ernest Shackleton. The site is of exceptional historical importance and interest, and strict measures are set out in the ASPA management plan to ensure protection is comprehensive and effective, including conditions for regulating access.
2. The Management Plan was last updated in 2015, and in accordance with Annex V Article 6.3 New Zealand has undertaken a review of the Management Plan review for consideration in 2021. New Zealand has carried out the review concurrently with other ASPAs in the Ross Sea that are designated for their historic values. This helped to ensure policy consistency across all of the ASPA plans for historic sites in the Ross Sea.
3. Updates were made taking into account recent information on the status of the values and features within the Area, changes made in other ASPA management plans recently adopted, and the latest agreements by the Antarctic Treaty Parties.
4. A process of stakeholder consultation on the revisions involving Parties active in the Ross Sea region, Antarctic heritage professionals at the Antarctic Heritage Trust, and IAATO was undertaken over a period of more than six months.
5. Extensive editorial improvements to the structure, organisation and clarity of the text have been made, in particular through:
   1. the addition an Introduction;
   2. clarification of Aims and Objectives (Section 2);
   3. elaboration of Management Activities in more detail (Section 3);
   4. improvements to maps to support the management plan and addition of a new map on air access guidance to maintain consistency with adjacent ASPA No. 121 Cape Royds.
   5. restructuring the Description of the Area (Section 6);
   6. elimination of duplicative text in the sections relating to Access to the Area (Section 6(ii) and Section 7(ii)), and the addition of important policy detail on access to Section 7(ii);
   7. clarifications about structures within and near the Areas (Section 6(iii));
   8. focus of information on other protected areas in proximity that are relevant to the historic values of the site (Section 6(iv));
   9. edits to General Permit Conditions (Section 7(i)) so these are consistent with wording used in other recent ASPA plans;
   10. provision of more specific detail on the conditions of access to the Area, including on pedestrian, vehicle, small boat and aircraft access, and for use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) within the Area (Section 7(ii));
   11. improvement in the clarity of limits to the numbers of people that are permitted within the ASPA at any given time (Section 7(ii));
   12. reorganisation of the Code of Conduct (Section 7(iii)) and clarifying that it is mandatory so that items of greater importance appear earlier in the list, the potential for fire in the historic huts being of greatest concern. Use of selfie sticks inside huts has recently emerged of concern because of their potential to knock delicate artefacts within a confined space, and this item has been added to the Code;
   13. strengthening provisions on the import of materials and organisms into the ASPAs, consistent with provisions made in other ASPAs and in the CEP Non-native Species Manual (2019) (Section 7(vi));
   14. clarification when materials for heritage purposes may be introduced into the Area (Section 7(vii));
   15. clarification of the conditions under which materials may be removed, in particular those that pose a threat to the *historic* values of the site, and that where items may be removed for conservation purposes their return is the preferred outcome unless they are at risk of being damaged or destroyed (Section 7(viii));
   16. clarification of measures necessary to meet the aims of the Management Plan (Section 7(x)), in particular that people responsible for managing site visits must be trained to be capable of fulfilling their roles and that they must actively monitor activities and take actions to correct any behaviour that is not in compliance with the Management Plan;
   17. addition of a brief list of supporting documentation and a list of boundary coordinates (Section 8).
6. Revisions to the management plan attached to this Working Paper have been extensive, and have involved detailed review and discussions by stakeholders, and in particular among national programmes operating in the region, with the Antarctic Heritage Trust and IAATO. However, New Zealand has classified the revisions as ‘minor’ because matters of critical policy substance, such as the values protected by the site, the policies on numbers of visitors allowed, activities that are allowed, the conditions of access, and the boundary configuration have not changed.