Revised Management Plan for Antarctic Specially Protected Area No. 124

Cape Crozier, Ross Island

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| ASPA No. 124 Cape Crozier, 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 |
| *First designation:* | Recommendation IV-6 (1966) SPA No.6,  Recommendation VII-4 (1975) SSSI No.4 |
| *First adoption of management plan:* | Recommendation VII-4 (1975) SSSI No.4 |
| *Any revisions to management plan:* | Recommendation VIII-2 (1975), Measure 3 (2001), Measure 1 (2002), Measure 7 (2008), Measure 3 (2014) |
| *Current management plan:* | Measure 3 (2014) |
| *Any extensions of expiry dates of management plan:* | Recommendation X-6 (1979), Recommendation XII-5 (1983), Recommendation XIII-7 (1985), Recommendation XVI-7 (1991), Measure 3 (2001) |
| *Renamed and renumbered by Decision 1 (2002) as:* | ASPA No. 124 Cape Crozier, Ross Island |
| *Other relevant measures:* | Resolution 1 (1998), 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?* | 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.* | 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)?** | (b) representative examples of major terrestrial, including glacial and aquatic, ecosystems and marine ecosystems;  (c) areas with important or unusual assemblages of species, including major colonies of breeding native birds or mammals;  (e) areas of particular interest to ongoing or planned scientific research;  (h) sites or monuments of recognized historic value. |
| **9. Have you identified the main Environmental Domain represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 3 (2008))?** | Yes. Environment P – Ross and Ronne-Filchner ice shelves and 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))?** | Yes. Region 9 – South Victoria Land. |
| **11) Have you identified any Antarctic Important Bird Areas represented by the ASPA/ASMA (Resolution 5 (2015))?** | Cape Crozier is identified as IBA No. 187. |

ASPA No. 124 Cape Crozier, Ross Island

1. The Management Plan for ASPA No. 124 Cape Crozier was last revised in 2014, and review thus fell due in 2019. Accordingly, the United States has reviewed the Management Plan and made a number of revisions.
2. Cape Crozier was originally designated as Specially Protected Area (SPA) No. 6 (1966) on the grounds that the region supports a rich bird and mammal fauna as well as microfauna and microflora, and that the ecosystem depends on a substantial mixing of marine and terrestrial elements of outstanding scientific interest. With the re-designation as SSSI No.4 (1975) a protection of the long-term studies of the studies of the population dynamics and social behaviour of emperor (*Aptenodytes forsteri*) and Adélie (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) penguins was ensured. The current Management Plan reaffirms the values of the Area.
3. The values of the Area have been revised to give more recognition to the importance of the habitat associated with persistent sea ice that forms in the large cracks in the Ross Ice Shelf for various species, including emperor and Adélie penguins and Weddell seals. The first record of Adélie penguins apparently breeding on fast ice was made in these cracks near Cape Crozier (LaRue *et al*. 2019). While perhaps a rare and transitory event, when considered together with frequent use of this area by non-breeding penguins as well as by seals of several species, this underscores the importance of adjacent sea ice to the ecology of the Area. In addition, the values have been revised to recognize the first discovery of a circovirus in penguins at Cape Crozier (Morandini 2019). The circovirus was identified in Adélie penguins and as a new species.
4. Revisions to the scientific description of the Area have been made as well as updates to aircraft access and overflight conditions, including addition of a provision covering Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS).
5. No changes have been made to the boundaries of the Area. No substantive changes to overall management policies have been made. Therefore the revisions have been classified as ‘minor’ in nature and in effect.
6. The principal changes to the provisions of the existing Management Plan include:
   1. Revisions to take account of new agreements and guidance reached by the ATCM since the previous Management Plan was adopted, and with other management plans recently adopted by the ATCM;
   2. *Section 1 Description of values to be protected.* Additional recognition has been noted of the importance of the habitat associated with persistent sea ice in the large cracks in the Ross Ice Shelf for various species, including emperor and Adélie penguins and Weddell seals. A small Adélie penguin sub-colony was observed apparently breeding on this fast ice in November 2018, which is the first record of Adélie penguins breeding on sea ice in Antarctica. A new species of circovirus was discovered in Adélie penguins at Cape Crozier, which was the first record of a circovirus in penguins;
   3. *Section 2 Aims and objectives.* Specification that the potential historic and heritage values of any artefacts should be taken into account before their removal and/or disposal, while allowing for appropriate clean-up and remediation if required;
   4. *Section 6(i) Geographical co-ordinates, boundary markers and natural features.* Revisions to the scientific description of the Area, including updates on the number of breeding penguins, south polar skuas and Weddell seals within the Area. Designation of the Area as Important Bird Area No. 187 has been noted;
   5. *Section 7(ii) Aircraft access and overflight*. The recommendation was added that: “pilots should be aware that congregations of penguins commonly occur on the sea ice adjacent to the coast, and associated with the ice shelf ‘canyons’”. Restrictions regarding use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) was added;
   6. *Section 8 - Supporting documentation*. The reference list has been updated.
   7. The scientific name for South polar skua (*Stercorarius maccormicki*) recently changed to *Catharacta maccormicki* (see BirdLife International Data Zone: http://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/south-polar-skua-catharacta-maccormicki Accessed Mar 2022). The management plan has been amended as appropriate.

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.

**References**

LaRue, M., D. Iles, S. Labrousse, G. Ballard, D. Ainley & B. Saenz. 2019. A possible Adélie penguin sub-colony on fast ice by Cape Crozier, Antarctica. *Antarctic Science*. **31** (4): 189-194.

Morandini, V., K. Dugger, G. Ballard, M. Elrod, A. Schmidt, V. Ruoppolo, A. Lescroel, D. Jongsomjit, M. Massaro, J. Pennycook, G. Kooyman, K. Schmidlin, S. Kraberger, D. Ainley & A. Varsani. 2019. Identification of a novel Adélie Penguin Circovirus at Cape Crozier (Ross Island, Antarctica). *Viruses*. **11** (12): 1088.