Revision of the Management Plan for Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA) No. 164 Scullin and Murray Monoliths, Mac.Robertson Land

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Working Paper submitted by Australia

Summary

In accordance with Article 6.3 of Annex V to the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, Australia has undertaken a five-yearly review of the management plan for Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASPA) 164 Scullin and Murray Monoliths. The review was conducted with reference to Annex V and the *Guide to the Preparation of Management Plans for Antarctic Specially Protected Areas* (the Guide) appended to Resolution 2 (2011). The following sections briefly describe the Area, and describe the proposed minor amendments to the management plan. Australia recommends that the CEP approves the attached revised management plan.

Background

Scullin and Murray monoliths are situated on the coast of Mac.Robertson Land, approximately 160 kilometres east of Mawson research station (Australia). ASPA 164 Scullin and Murray Monoliths was originally designated under Measure 2 (2005), after a proposal by Australia. Revised management plans were adopted under Measure 13 (2010) and Measure 16 (2015).

The Area is primarily designated to protect the outstanding ecological and scientific values associated with the important assemblage of seabirds. It supports the greatest concentration of breeding seabird colonies in East Antarctica, including five species of petrel (Antarctic petrels *Thalassoica antarctica*, Cape petrels *Daption capense*, southern fulmars *Fulmarus glacialoides*, snow petrels *Pagodroma nivea*, Wilson’s storm petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*), one penguin (Adélie penguin *Pygoscelis adeliae*) and one larid (south polar skua *Catharacta maccormicki*). The Antarctic petrel colony, at over 160,000 pairs, is one of the largest breeding colonies for the species. The Area also possesses outstanding aesthetic values arising from the geomorphology of the two monoliths and the spectacular backdrop of the glaciers that descend from the continental plateau and flow around the monoliths to end in calving glaciers.

Review of management plan

The review of the management plan involved a literature review, and consultation with personnel permitted to enter the Area during the past five years, including ornithologists familiar with the Area. The revisions to the management plan enhance protection of the values that the Area was designated to protect.

Summary of amendments to the management plan for ASPA 164

A revised management plan for ASPA 164 is presented at Attachment A. No major changes are proposed, and there are no changes to the Area boundary. Proposed minor amendments are summarised as follows:

* Sections 1 and 6(i) revised to include updated population estimates for Adélie penguins and southern fulmars, and to make reference to the identification of Scullin and Murray monoliths as Important Bird Area 126.
* Section 7(ii) revised, including to clarify provisions for the possible use of twin-engine helicopters to access Scullin Monolith, and conditions for the use of remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS).
* Section 8 revised to include addition of recent publication.
* Map C revised to more accurately depict extent of Adélie penguin concentration.
* Editorial amendments have been made throughout the document.

Recommendation

Australia recommends that the CEP approves the attached revised management plan for ASPA 164 Scullin and Murray Monoliths, Mac.Robertson Land.

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| ASPA No. 164, Scullin and Murray Monoliths, Mac.Robertson Land | |
| **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 (2005) |
| *First adoption of management plan:* | Measure 2 (2005) |
| *Any revisions to management plan:* | Measure 13 (2010)  Measure 16 (2015) |
| *Current management plan:* | Measure 16 (2015) |
| *Any extensions of expiry dates of management plan:* | N/A |
| *Renamed and renumbered by Decision 1 (2002) as:* | N/A |
| *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?* | Yes. (Minor changes to graphics in Map C to more accurately depict extent of Adélie penguin colony) |
| *(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.* | * Sections 1 and 6(i) revised to include updated population estimates for Adélie penguins and southern fulmars, and to make reference to the identification of Scullin and Murray monoliths as Important Bird Area 126. * Section 7(ii) revised, including to clarify provisions for the possible use of twin-engine helicopters to access Scullin Monolith, and conditions for the use of remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS). * Section 8 revised to include addition of recent publication. * Map C revised to more accurately depict extent of Adélie penguin colony. * Editorial amendments have been made throughout the document. |
| **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 |
| **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)?** | Article 3.2(c) Areas with important or unusual assemblages of species, including major colonies of breeding native birds or mammals. |
| **9. Have you identified the main Environmental Domain represented by the ASPA/ASMA (refer to the ‘Environmental Domains Analysis for the Antarctic Continent’ appended to Resolution 3 (2008))?** | Yes. D East Antarctic coastal geologic and L Continental coastal-zone ice sheet. |
| **10. If relevant, have you identified the main Antarctic Conservation Biogeographic Region represented by the ASPA/ASMA (refer to the ‘Antarctic Conservation**  **Biogeographic Regions’ appended to Resolution 6 (2012))?** | Yes. 16 Prince Charles Mountains |
| **11. If relevant, have you identified any Antarctic Important Bird Areas (Resolution 5 (2015)) represented by the ASPA/ASMA (refer to the ‘Important Bird Areas in Antarctica 2015 Summary’ appended to ATCMXXXVIII IP27 and the full report available at: http://www.era.gs/resources/iba/)?** | Yes. 126 Scullin Monolith/Murray Monolith. |