

Notes and News

New MPA plan for Victoria enshrines compensation of fishermen

In a revision of its plan for a series of marine national parks in state waters, the Australian state government of Victoria has developed a compensation scheme for fishermen affected by the new parks. Under the revised plan, financial assistance would be available to eligible fishery license holders to cover increased fishing operating costs and reduced catches directly related to the MPAs. The plan also calls for creation of an assessment panel to determine compensation amounts and an appeals tribunal.

Last year, the ruling Labor government introduced a version of the plan to the state Parliament, only to reach an impasse with the opposition Liberal party on the issue of compensation (*MPA News 3:1*). Although that plan offered AU \$1.2 million (US \$636,000) in "transitional assistance" to affected fishermen for reduced catches, it did not address increased operating costs. It also prevented fishermen from seeking further compensation, such as through the Supreme Court.

The revised plan adds an additional marine national park and a marine sanctuary to last year's proposal. If approved by Parliament (which would require the support of the opposition party), the plan would set aside 5.5% of Victorian waters as no-take areas, compared to 0.05% currently. The government expects to introduce the revised plan to Parliament later this year. To read a government overview of the revised plan, go to <http://www.nre.vic.gov.au>.

Only 14% of coral-reef MPAs in Southeast Asia effectively managed

A new report published by a team of international organizations states that only a small percentage - 14% - of coral-reef MPAs in Southeast Asia are managed effectively. The report *Reefs at Risk in Southeast Asia* provides a country-by-country analysis of the human pressures to coral reefs in the region, and integrates available information on reef status, protection, and management. The report is published by the World Resources Institute in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation and Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the International Coral Reef Action Network, and the World Fish Center.

The report states that some 646 MPAs cover an estimated 8% of coral reefs in the region. Of the 332 MPAs whose management effectiveness could be determined by local experts (based on such criteria as staff size and existence of a management plan), 14% were rated as effectively managed, 48% had "partial effective management", and 38% had inadequate management. The report is intended to be the first in a series of regional analyses; the next will focus on the Caribbean. **For more information** and to view the report online, go to <http://www.wri.org/reefsatrisk/>. To go directly to the chapter on MPAs, go to http://www.wri.org/reefsatrisk/rrsea_management.html

Fines levied for violations of Tortugas reserve

US federal prosecutors have charged eight fishing vessels with poaching in the Tortugas Ecological Reserve, a no-take zone designated last year within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). These are the first citations for violations of the reserve; the fines range from US \$12,000-\$20,000, in addition to seizure of the catches. The accused vessels have the option of paying the fine or contesting the charges in court.

The reserve, located at the western end of the Florida Keys archipelago, is relatively isolated, posing an enforcement challenge for managers. "Fully enforcing the reserve is a top priority for the sanctuary, and a commitment we made to everyone who supported the reserve," said Cheva Heck, public affairs officer for FKNMS. The US Coast Guard, which caught three of the cited vessels in a one-day patrol of the reserve in January, has provided the sanctuary with two 82-foot (25-meter) cutters, free of charge, for use in regular enforcement of the reserve. The cutters are now undergoing a refitting in preparation for their new assignment. Designation of the reserve was the end result of an intensive, multistakeholder process (*MPA News 1:1*). **For more information: Cheva Heck**, FKNMS, 216 Ann Street, Key West, FL 33040, USA. Tel: +1 305 292 0311; E-mail: cheva.heck@noaa.gov.

Russia designates protected area off Kamchatka

Russia has set aside a 123-km² area off Kamchatka as a no-take zone to protect marine mammal rookeries and seabird colonies. Designated officially as the "area of special protection adjacent to Nalychevo nature park", the site will be administered by the regional fishing authority, with assistance from the Kamchatka directorate of nature parks and WWF (an international NGO). It stretches 20 km along the coast, from the mouth of the Nalycheva River to that of the Vakhil River. **For more information: Vassily Spiridonov**, Marine Program Coordinator, WWF Russia, Tel: +7 095 727 09 39; E-mail: vspiridonov@wwf.ru.

Proceedings available from conference on MPA economics

Proceedings from the *Economics of Marine Protected Areas* conference, held in July 2000 at the University of British Columbia Fisheries Centre, are now available for purchase (CDN \$40). To order the 255-page report, contact Events Officer, Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia, 2204 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4 Canada. Tel: +1 604 822 0618; E-mail: events@fisheries.ubc.ca. A selection of these papers appears in the current issue (Vol. 30, No. 2) of the peer-reviewed journal *Coastal Management*, published by Taylor & Francis Ltd. (www.taylorandfrancis.com).

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