

# **TSITSIKAMMA FACT SHEET**

## **FACTS THAT MAY BE USED WHEN YOU COMMENT ON THE DRAFT GAZETTE NUMBER 39424**

### **DRAFT REGULATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TSITSIKAMMA NATIONAL PARK MARINE PROTECTED AREA**

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Please do not copy and paste these points directly into your letter (the authorities will just put them together as one comment). Rather select your points and use your own words for maximum impact. If you do decide to comment on the draft gazette in your personal capacity, please also send a copy to [eduoceans@gmail.com](mailto:eduoceans@gmail.com) so that we can keep a record of your comments (in case we need them later).

#### **Possible points:**

1. The Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area (TMPA) is the oldest marine protected area (MPA) in Africa (proclaimed in 1964)
2. It is one of the largest “no-take” MPAs in South Africa
3. The TMPA is critical for marine biodiversity protection and fisheries management in the Agulhas Bioregion.
4. The benefits of the TMPA are for all South Africans, not just a select few.
5. Opening the TMPA to an exclusive group of local community members for recreational fishing purposes could jeopardize the status of other protected areas (both marine and terrestrial) in South Africa in terms of the precedent being set.
6. The marine biodiversity protected within the TMPA is almost impossible to replace.
7. Currently only 334km (9%) of the coastline of SA is protected in no-take areas. This is far lower than South Africa’s own target of 15% (568 km) by 2028.
8. Opening up 12 km of the TMPA which has been protected for at least the past 37 years for recreational shore fishing and invertebrate bait collecting is clearly a step in the wrong direction.
9. According to the World Parks Congress held in Sydney 2014, no-take MPAs are fundamental and undoubtedly one of the most effective methods of achieving both the biodiversity protection and the fisheries management goals of MPAs.

10. Many of South Africa's linefish species are now severely depleted and in a legally declared crisis. The management of the linefishery in South Africa is very difficult and MPAs such as the TMPA are essential for the long term survival of the linefishery.
11. MPAs provide a reservoir of adult, spawning fish, which can contribute to rebuilding stocks in adjacent exploited areas.
12. Even very low levels of shore fishing will deplete the linefish stocks built up over many years. Within a short time period (1-2 months) the fish populations in the opened areas will have been reduced to that found in exploited areas adjacent to the Park. Once fish stocks are depleted within the zoned areas, anglers are likely to try and get access (legally or illegally) to other unfished areas within the TMPA.
13. Opening of the TMPA to shore fishing would result in the rapid depletion of healthy, near-pristine stocks to the detriment of recreational and small-scale commercial fisheries operating in areas adjacent to the TMPA. The short-term benefits for the few fishermen given permits to fish in the TMPA would result in a net loss to both marine biodiversity and the linefishing industry as a whole.
14. South Africa is signatory to a number of international agreements and protocols to establish and maintain MPAs, *inter alia* the Convention on Biological Diversity, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Resolutions of the World Parks Congress. Opening the TNP is contrary to these agreements.
15. The proposed shore fishing effort in the TMPA is excessive and the offtake will reduce abundance and biomass of previously protected fish populations.
16. The TNP is part of our natural heritage. We trust the DEA and SANParks to take care of it for us and for our children and grandchildren.

### **An assessment by leading scientists in South Africa reveals the following:**

1. Of the 25 most common shore angling species caught within the TMPA 20 (80%) are endemic to South Africa and found nowhere else in the world. South Africa therefore has the sole responsibility to manage these species sustainably for future generations.
2. Fourteen (56%) of the species are resident and do not move around much which means that they are well suited to protection in a marine reserve – in the reserve they can grow large and breed to supply fish to areas outside the reserve.
3. 10 of the species are overexploited or collapsed within their South African distributions. No-take MPAs such as the TMPA are therefore vital to ensure the future survival and potential recovery of these fish populations. The fact that some species such as roman and bronze bream have healthy populations outside MPAs is primarily thanks to the protection these species receive within South Africa's existing network of no-take MPAs including the TMPA.
4. 9 of the top 25 species (36%) are listed on one of the IUCN's Global Red List of threatened categories (i.e. Near threatened, Vulnerable or Endangered). This highlights South Africa's international obligation to manage these species on a sustainable basis.
5. 13 of these species (52%) are listed on the South African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI) as orange or red.
6. Some of these fish grow to ages in excess of 40 years.