



Terms of Reference

The West Coast Marine Protection Forum has been set up by the Conservator, Department of Conservation West Coast – Tai Poutini Conservancy as a non statutory body to consider how integrated marine protection can be achieved on the West Coast. Forum members are broadly representative of stakeholder, community and user group interests in the marine environment of the West Coast. The forum does not represent all users or interested parties but will facilitate opportunities for all who wish to have a say on marine protection issues and options.

Tangata whenua have a special role in this process, as treaty partners with the Crown, and as kaitiaki of Ngai Tahu Whanui Takiwa. Te Runanga o Makaawhio and Te Runanga o Ngati Waewae have a role as stakeholders, ensuring that the principal of Kaitiakitanga (stewardship) is appropriately expressed in the marine environment, and as treaty partners of the Crown.

The Forum has been established in accordance with the framework for regional consultation set out in the ¹Marine Protected Areas Policy Statement and Implementation Plan (draft). The MPA annual operating plan proposes that the department of Conservation on the West Coast will commence discussions with its communities of interest in 2005.

1. Forum Objectives and Mission Statement

The principal objective of the forum is to consider how best to achieve integrated marine protection on the West Coast consistent with the protection objectives of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy and the principles of the MPA Policy.

The Forum has adopted the following Mission Statement.

“That the character and quality of West Coast- Tai Poutini marine environment be protected, maintained or improved for present and future generations to use and enjoy”

The forum will aim to identify the key issues for marine biodiversity viability and the values that are central to communities of interest, stakeholders and users. It will seek to facilitate informed discussion and work towards consensus on options for achieving integrated marine protection in the West Coast region taking account of the full range of statutory marine protection tools available.

These options will be provided in a report identifying the biodiversity protection merits of each site/area identified as holding particular biodiversity value and any attendant stakeholder, user implications to the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries.

This task has nine primary components:

- Understand the social, biological, recreational and commercial characteristics and dynamics of the West Coast marine environment.

¹ Marine Protected Areas Policy Statement and Implementation Plan., Ministry of Fisheries, Department of Conservation, 8 November 2004

- Facilitate opportunities for community, stakeholder and user input into consideration of options for integrated protection of West Coast marine biodiversity.
- Promote public appreciation and enjoyment of the West Coast marine environment
- Consider the views of the various stakeholders, tangata whenua, users and NGO's interested in marine protection on the West Coast,
- Take account of relevant scientific and technical advice on the condition and status of West Coast marine ecosystems and biodiversity,
- Evaluate options to achieve integrated protection of marine biodiversity that is both distinctive and characteristic of the West Coast consistent with the protection objectives of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy set out in the MPA process,
- Work towards consensus on those options
- Report on those options,
- Communicate with community, stakeholder and user groups.

2 Key expected outcome

The key expected outcome of the forum is a considered evaluation of issues and options to achieve integrated protection of marine biodiversity that is distinctive and characteristic of the West Coast and consistent with the protection objectives of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy set out in the MPA process.

Information considered by the forum, the considerations made by it, and conclusions reached will inform this evaluation. Conclusions will identify options for integrated marine protection, including statutory protection under Min Fish regulations and Conservation legislation or other mechanisms as appropriate.

3 Forum Scope

The geographical scope of the forum is defined as the West Coast Regional Council boundary defined as Kahurangi Point in the north to Awarua point in the south.

The seaward boundary will generally be confined to the 12 nautical mile limit of the territorial sea.

The onshore boundary will generally be delineated by the boundary of the coastal marine area defined by the West Coast Regional Council coastal plan.

The scope of the process to be undertaken by the forum is in three parts:

- Phase one is information gathering and communication; facilitating input from stakeholders, users and communities of interest, evaluating scientific and technical advice and ensuring that good communication is in place.
- Phase two is evaluating information and advice leading to development of options and keeping stakeholders, users and communities of interest informed.
- Phase three is reporting on those options to the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries as well as other agencies as appropriate.

4. Legal Framework

The forum is established by the Conservator, Department of Conservation, West Coast - Tai Poutini conservancy pursuant to section 53 (2) (b) of the Conservation Act 1987 for the purposes of consulting with community, stakeholder, user group, and tangata whenua on regional priorities for marine protection consistent with the principles of the MPA policy.