

<sup>e</sup>Jile GOUVERNEMENT DE LA NOUVELLE-CALÉDONIE















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Annua

NATURAL PARK OF THE CORAL SEA

© Reef Astrolabe. Phillipe Frolla. University of New Caledonia

## PARK NATURAL OF THE CORAL SEA



#### SURFACE AREA

Borders : West and South by Australia, North by the Salomon Islands, East by Vanuatu and Fiji.

Total Surface Area : 1,3 million de km<sup>2</sup> including

Emerged land : 5 km<sup>2</sup>

- Internal waters :11000km<sup>2</sup> or 25% of New Caledonia's internal waters
- Territorial waters : **35 000 km<sup>2</sup> or 45 % of** New Caledonia's territorial waters
- Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
  1,25 million km<sup>2</sup>

Land reserves on Entrecasteaux : 0,5 km<sup>2</sup>

Natural Ressources on Entrecasteaux : 3 240 km<sup>2</sup>

Récifs de l'Astrolabe

Nalpole

Matthew

Hunter

Récifs d'Entrecasteaux

E.

**Récif** Pétrie

Plateau des Chesterfield

Plateau des Bellona



#### **KEY DATES**

#### • 12 OCTOBER 2010

Signing of the collaboration convention between New Caledonia and the Marine Protected Area Agency to undertake the Regional Strategic Analysis of the maritime space managed by New Caledonia.

#### 4 SEPTEMBER 2012

The President of the Government of New Caledonia announces that a future Natural Park of the Coral Sea will be created during the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting.

#### 22 NOVEMBER 2012

Public meeting to launch the public consultation on the Regional Strategic Analysis.

#### **17 DECEMBER 2013**

Public meeting to approve the Regional Strategic Analysis.

#### 14 MARCH 2014

Public meeting to present the draft decree to create the Natural Park.

#### 23 APRIL 2014

The decree which creates the Park makes the writing of a management plan compulsory.

#### 2 MARCH 2015

Decree creating the Management Committee.

#### 28 MAY 2015

1st management committee, beginning of the writing of the management plan.

#### **26 JUNE 2015**

The 1st Board is elected.

#### **7 JULY 2016**

4 overarching goals and 16 objectives are approved. 20 DECEMBER 2016

The management plan to be presented to the population in 2017 during a public consultation is approved.







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Marine Area created by a decree of the Government of New Caledonia on 23 April 2014 to preserve the ecological integrity of the maritime environment, its objectives relate to:

- the cultural and natural heritage,
- practices at sea,
- its operation (and governance),and its integration in the Pacific Region.



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# **DUR NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Entrecasteaux is one of the main breeding sites for green turtles and seabirds (Sula sulas, sooty terns, and frigates)

Protecting its heritage is one of the Natural Park's main management objectives. It includes the ecosystems and the species housed in the Park as well as its cultural dimension. The creation of a maritime Protected Area around the Entrecasteaux Atolls in 2013, a zone situated to the North of New Caledonia and listed as a UNESCO heritage site since July 2008 is a prime example of the ways in which the Park fulfils its objectives. Their distance from New Caledonia's coastline, combined with human presence makes the Entrecasteaux Atolls an exceptionally interesting site in terms of environment conservation not only in New Caledonia but also in the entire Pacific region. The site is also a preferred breeding ground for green turtles and seabirds. Therefore, it is not surprising that Birdlife International, an NGO involved in protecting nature, and birdlife in particular recognizes the Entrecasteaux Atolls as an important site. For certain species, the d'Entrecasteaux Atolls house more than 1 % of the worldwide population (more than 10 000 individuals)! It is the case for the Sula Sula with a colony of 15 000, mostly present on Surprise Island. More than 10 000 couples of sooty terns, spread around the four islands, live on the Entrecasteaux Atolls. As for green turtles, they have made the Entrecasteaux atolls one of their main laying sites in the insular Pacific. Huon, Fabre, Leleizour and Surprise Islands are sanctuaries where green turtles come to lay en masse, every year, between December and March. Monitoring has been taking place for ten years on the Entrecasteaux atolls whose islands are classified as both natural reserves and wilderness areas.

#### 7

#### PARK'S FIRST NATURAL RESERVE

#### RELATED **SUB-OBJECTIVES** in the Management Plan

- 2 Limit direct human impacts directs on a significant part of ecosystems
- 6 Protect keys habitats, indispensable to the life cycle of the Park's species
- 7 Pay particular attention to the Park's iconic species
- **13** Regulate the frequentation by the
- general public **14** Labeled the frequentation by professionals
- **16** Regulate fishing activities in the lagoon

#### A TEN-YEAR **EVALUATION**



#### THE MANAGEMENT OF **ENTRECASTEAUX**

Entrecasteaux is the first area of the Natural Park to have its own management plan and specific regulations since 2012. Entrecasteaux is included every year in the specialty program. In 2016, the monitoring of the Green Turtles' laying period and the seabirds nesting period took place between 7-18 december. These annual missions are possible because the Government of New Caledonia makes its 24-meters vessel and its 5 crew members available. After they arrive on site, the crew voluntarily participates to the counting of Green Turtles traces, alongside the five specialists, according to protocols developed by the South Pacific Community (SPC), as well as to the banding process, by applying an easily repeatable method from year to year.

#### EXPANDING OUR KNOWLEDGE

The banded turtle shells are systematically measured to monitor the evolution of their average size. The female turtles that have already been banded are catalogue. These identifications which allow identifying turtles and observing their behavior was initiated in 1989 by the Association de la Sauvegarde de la Nature Néo-Calédonienne (ASSNC), and spearheaded since 2007 by the Government, will help evaluate the importance of the turtle population in the Pacific region. It will also answer questions such as : Are there many turtles on Entrecasteaux ? Are there connections between neighboring countries?



Banding operation of a green turtle, DMA FES

The number of bird specimens observed by species (sooty and fairy terns, the Padic and the Ariel frigates, Sula Sulas, masked boobies) are recorded from year to year and data is regularly updated.

#### A REGULATED STOP

The frequentation on the Entrecasteaux atolls, a site listed as a natural reserve and a wilderness area, is closely monitored and a transit declaration must be filed with the Fishing and Environment Service of the Department for Maritime Affairs since 2013. Generally, foreign and French pleasure boats are transiting between Vanuatu and Australia pleasure boats. In 2016, 10 boats transited, and half of them also went to the Chesterfields. In addition, two tourists carriers authorized to stop on Entrecasteaux brought 11 tourists in February and October 2016.



Entrecasteaux, Leleizour Island, recommendations, DMA FES

#### Number climbs' turtles calculated each day on Entrecasteaux between 2007 and 2016



#### 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

A bibliographical summary on our knowledge of Marine Mammals frequentation in the Park is published with the help of Pew Charitable Trusts.

#### MAY 2016

A study by Marlene Edgemont, PhD student at the IRD is launched, in partnership with Conservation International. It is focused on the Natural Park of the Coral Sea's cultural dimension to better understand the relationship between Men and the Ocean in New Caledonia.

First sighting of Illegal Fishing Vessels (Blue Boats in the Natural Park of the Coral Sea's waters.

#### AUGUST 2016

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of Maritime Heritage Site Managers to facilitate the sharing of experiences which could serve as a source of inspiration. The Government of New Caledonia, alongside the CEN has discussed common issues with its international counterparts: tourist numbers, fishing and climate change.

#### SEPTEMBER

Installations of beacons on humpback whales with the financial participation of the WWF during the Maracas scientific campaigns (IRD), to monitor the whales' movements and better understand their behaviors.

Annual Meeting of the Entrecasteaux Working Group during which the conclusions of the assessment of the management plan undertaken in late 2015 were presented to participants. A recap of the actions undertaken and to be undertaken was presented.

exploratory study on the Park's cultural dimension.

of Conservation International.

10th Annual Monitoring Mission on d'Entrecasteaux conducted by a team of five people (SCO, DITTT, DIMENC, government DAM, volunteers) to count the number of traces from green turtles on Huon, Fabre and Leleizour Islands at dawn and to band turtles. As it is the case every year, an inventory of seabirds is undertaken. This time, topographical and geological measurements by the DIMENC and the DITTT were collected to monitor the evolution of the Islands' coastline (Oblicprogram, Observatoire du Littoral Calédonien)

on the Chesterfield Plateau.

Report on the preliminary results of the

Study on the genetics and the endemism of the reef-fish in the Coral Sea (Bioreef Mission) on the Petrie and Astrolabe reefs with the assistance

#### DECEMBER 2016

A Vietnamese Vessel is arrested while fishing illegally It was rerouted to Noumea by New Caledonia's Armed Forces.





#### **RELATED SUB-OBJECTIVES** in the Management Plan

- 8 Record, identify and spatialize the immaterial cultural heritage
- **10** Preserve the material and immaterial cultural heritage
- **11** Facilitate The process by which local populations take ownership of the cultural heritage
- **12** Encourage development projects around the Park's cultural heritage



Marlène Dégremont with the traditional chiefs of the North Province, DMA FES

#### BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PARK'S CULTURAL DIMENSION

The link with the sea is essential to the identity and culture of the Pacific people in general and for numerous Kanak clans in particular, which use maritime animals as totems. In early 2016, a study on the cultural dimension of the Natural Park of the Coral Sea was launched by PhD student Marlène Dégremont. Funded by the NGO Conservation International (a member of the Natural Park's Management Committee), this exploratory study was completed and participated in the implementation of the chapter « A Protected Natural and Cultural Heritage ». Mainly undertaken on the East coast of New Caledonia, this research highlights the strong relationship between Men and the ocean as well as the different ways of managing and representing the marine environment.

#### Links historico-cultural

- --- Space of influence Belep (Hoot Ma Whaap)
- -- Space of influence laai-Hoot . Ma Whaap
- ---- Space of influence Maré-Île des Pins (Nengone-Djubea-Kaponé)
- Space of influence Vanuatu (Anatom)
- mm Space of issues

#### MULTIPLE PRACTICES, **KNOW-HOW AND** NETWORKS

These links to the sea gives a glimpse into the ways in which the ocean helped build the customary organization and the oral tradition, which are resolutely anchored in the history of the people inhabiting this country. The ocean also vehicles social, symbolical and spiritual values. Therefore this heritage has its origin in the relationship between island people and their environment. The concept of maritime land exists in the kanak culture and some islands play a customary role. Multiple terrestrial and maritime networks between islands are part of the Natural Park of the Coral Sea's cultural heritage. For example, a traditional link exists between the Kanak populations in Bélep. The first research conclusions suggest that this cultural heritage is discernable through toponymy. These links to the sea are therefore more numerous than one might think.



See the study on the cultural dimension of the Park on line at mer-de-corail.gouv.nc, p 18 « names in local language and management plan issues »



## GUARANTEEING AND SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE RESPONSIBLE AND RECOGNIZED PRACTICES

and a statistic and

KRIGHT STUDIESULAUSULS JUSU







#### THE MONITORING OF THE LONGLINE FICHING

« fishing

#### **ONBOARD OBSERVERS**



The longline fishing sector in New Caledonia targets tunas and more particularly white tunas.

The impact of this activity on resources is considered minimal and weapon uses are considered as sustainable. Measurements collected on tunas are subjected to regular monitoring. The deliberation 50/CP of 20 April 2011 which defines New Caledonia's fisheries policy stipulates that ship-owners must provide a detailed report of catches **activity** after each campaign (fishing logs). These documents, while correctly filled out by shipcaptains do not reflect all catches. Catches which are not kept onboard (accidental catch of non-commercial species of fish/damaged fish) do not systematically figure on fishing logs. Therefore, the reported amount of catches is not an exact reflection of the amount of fish killed by fishing.

The implementation as early as 2001 of the Fishing Observers program entails the presence of observers onboard longliners to collect all data related to ship activity. This data is collected from a sufficient sample to be representative of the ship's overall activity and allow as precise an estimation of the total mortality caused by longline fishing in New Caledonia as possible,

### Onboard observer collect all data related to ship

It is also an opportunity to broaden our knowledge of the species caught and to maintain a close and privileged relationship with crews.

observer missions have been done by two observers autorized



Back from fishing deep sea-fishing community what in Nouville, DMA

In 2016, 17 missions were undertaken by two authorized observers, on 13 of the 17 vessels constituting New Caledonia's longline fleet, for a total of 215 days at sea and 137 settings. With 6 % of the hooks and 5,8 % of the lines set, New Caledonia complies with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's management requirement which sets the regulatory rate at 5 %.





of the caledonian longline fishing species and marginal

The analysis of the observation data confirms that the impact of longline fishing on iconic species remains minimal and marginal. The particular care taken by crews in releasing animals accidentally caught (including sharks) is noted.

The onboard observers program also contributes to expanding our knowledge on pelagic species through the collection of biological samples on fish. These samples are then sent to the SPC which is in charge of a comprehensive scientific program aimed at acquiring a better understanding of the exploited species' life cycle. In 2016, observers collected samples on 262 fish (145 tunas, 89 swordfish) during 15 of the 17 observed campaigns.

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#### The impact

## on iconic pelagic remains minimal



#### RELATED **SUB-OBJECTIVE** in the Management Plan

**15** Support and promote our responsible and sustainable deep sea fishing model



#### **PARTICIPATION TO** THE WORK OF FISHING ORGANIZATIONS



GARANTIR ET

## RELATED

SUB-OBJECTIVES in the Management Plan

21 Regulate, support and enhance research and the collection of samples of biological material to benefit New Caledonia

34 Expand knowledge to benefit the Park's management

#### THE KANACONO CAMPAIGN, A MANAGEMENTAD

While not a member of the management committee, the Marine Protected Area Agency is a partner of the Natural Park of the Coral Sea. In addition to participating to some working groups as part of the writing of the management plan, the agency helped the organization of the Kanacono scientific campaign financially, in partnership with the National Natural History Museum and the IRD. This mission is a part of the Tropical Deep-Sea Benthos Program, started 40 years ago. In August 2016, this research undertaken on deep habitats within the Coral Sea aimed to identify and study the diversity of marine invertebrates, notably through their preys and their venoms. On board the Alis, the IRD's oceanographic vessel, the Head of Mission, Nicolas Puillandre of the National Natural History Museum visited the Antigonia Seamount. South of the Isle of Pines as well as the North of the Norfolk Ridge.

#### **MYSTERIOUS SPECIES IN** NETS

For three weeks, samples were collected on the benthic fauna, that is to say the species that live at or skim the bottom of the sea while moving, by dredging and trawling through 138 collecting operations, a zoological sorting was undertaken. A photo ID of each species was taken.



Separation and identification of organisms, MNHN

In September 2016, Nicolas Puillandre's article published on the IRD's website gave a rather positive assessment of the work undertaken so far : « In addition to the numerous deep benthic organisms which we were certain to collect, we also caught some iconic and even mysterious species which might turn out to be new scientific discoveries thanks to the new analyses to be undertaken during the next few months and vears.»

#### KNOWLEDGE TO TAKE BETTER DECISIONS

The Kanacono campaign and all the others that have already taken place around the same theme, help us find out whether there are marine invertebrates endemic to New Caledonian waters. This research could inform discussions on the conservation of deep environments, and make the best information available to the Natural Park's manager, to decide for example where the enhanced protection areas should be. By the end of the work, the hope is to be able to build collections to enrich the National Natural History Museum's invertebrate database (https://expeditions.mnhn.fr), expand our knowledge of the benthic invertebrate fauna, and in particular of Conoideas, these marine carnivorous gastropods, commonly known as cones.

#### THE APA PROCEDURE : AN ETHICAL GUARANTEE

Regulating access to genetic resources and guaranteeing their just and equitable sharing are some of the foundations of the APA Procedure. It is aimed at sharing the benefits stemming from the use of genetic resources from plants, animals, bacteria or other organisms for commercial, research or other purposes.

The procedure meets objective 3 of the Convention on Biological Diversity which determines the organization of the relationship between provider and user of genetic resources and of associated traditional know-hows. The user asks for the fully-informed consent of the provider to obtain access. This sharing of benefits can lead to scientific collaborations, research partnerships, support for local development, etc. The APA procedure should allow us to fight bio piracy (the illegitimate use of genetic resources and indigenous know-hows).

And contribute to the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity.

#### A PARK EXPLORED BY SCIENTISTS

In 2016, 11 scientific missions were undertaken in the Park, including three on board the IRD-owned vessel Alis and four onboard the governmentowned Amborella and four on foreign scientific vessels. A wide array of subjects was studied :

-Physical and biogeochemical oceanography (Park) Sea beds' geology (Park)

The ecology of eels' larva (Park)

Shark movements (Park's islands and reefs)

-Sea mounts' biodiversity (Mount Antigonia)

- The dynamics of Tuna preys (Park)

- The ecology of hump whales

(Walpole, Orme bank, Chesterfields, and Bellona) - Reef health and biogeography of the species (Pétrie, Astrolabe)

In accordance with Article 7 of the decree establishing the Natural Park of the Coral Sea, every mission was subject to an authorization decree from the Government of New Caledonia. Funds may be provided by partners such as NGOs (Conservation International, Pew, WWF), the Marine Protected Area Agency or from scientific organizations or foundations. In 2016, scientific campaigns were led by the IRD, the SPC, Florida International University, the University of New Caledonia, the University of Sydney, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization( CSIRO), The Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), University of Tokyo, Nihon University, the Natural History Museum, Conservation International and Foundation Pacific





Entrecasteaux, poussin de sterne fuligineuse, Fabre Island, DMA FES

# ENSERING GOOD GOVERNANCE



#### NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY THE PARK IN 2016

Borders of the natural Park : west and south by Australia, north by the Salomon Islands, east by Vanuatu and Fidji.

#### **10 FULL TIME Equivalent (FTE) including :** Park Director : 0.75 FTE

- Policy officer for the Management and actions plans : 1 FTE
- Communication officer : 1 FTE
- Chief Scientist : 0.5 FTE
- Human Resources officer: 0.5 FTE
- GIS and data bases officer: 0.25 FTE
- Onboard Observers program : 2 FTE
- A monitoring vessel operating in the Park
- 80% of the time:4FTE







#### RELATED SUB-OBJECTIVES in the Management Plan

**24** Guarantee the Park's sustainability

25 Facilitate the involvement of Management Committee members

28 Facilitate participative management

26 Assess the compatibility between the decisions and the opinions expressed by the Management Committee 

#### DEDICATED TO THE PARK

June 2016 : creation of the Ocean Health Index on the scale of the Natural Park by Conservation International

#### September 2016 : an agent from the Fisheries and Environment Service participates to a training course on the piloting of drones which can be used during monitoring missions on far away islands by Conservation International

July 2016 : a scientific workshop is funded and organized by The Pew charitable trusts ; A final report is expected in 2017

#### A COLLÉGIAL ORGANIZATION

The Natural Park of the Coral Sea does not have any legal personality. Overseen by the Department for Maritime Affairs, it has a Management Committee, copresided by the President of the Government and the High Commissioner of the French Republic. This management committee is composed of four colleges: socioinstitutional, customary, professionals stakeholders and civil its society) which explains why organization is called collegial. Each college is composed of an equal number of people, for a total of 32 members, elected for 5 years. The Management Committee is tasked with developing a consensual Management Plan for the Natural Park; this strategic document describes the objectives to be met in the next five years to optimize the management of this marine area.

#### THINKING IN WORKING GROUPS

A twelve-member board (maximum) on which sit representatives of the Management Committee's four colleges, prepares and monitors the Management Committee's decisions. The current board, reelected in June 2016 is composed of 11 representatives from the Management Committee. The board meets as many times as necessary. NB : around 40 thematic meetings were organized to define the Management Plan's objectives.



The Management plan project presented during the 4th Management Committee in december 2016, DMA FES

#### The Management Committee is composed with 32 members elected for a 5 years period

The Department for Maritime Affairs (DMA) through its Fisheries and Marine environment service fulfils secretariat duties, coordinates, while monitoring progress and making sure that the elaboration of the management plan stays on schedule.



Press conference after the 4th Management Committee

#### 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

#### • APRIL 2016

Four working groups work on ecosystems. Preliminary work started in November 2015.

#### • 7 JULY 2016

The third Management Committee approves the structure of the Draft Management Plan.

LATE JULY 2016

•A new Working Group is formed for each chapter of the Management Plan.

#### SEPTEMBER 2016

The Board continues to work on the draft Management Plan to be presented in December.

#### OCTOBER 2016

Preparation of outreach meetings and debates with the general population.

#### 3 NOVEMBER 2016

• Communication working group on the organization of the public consultation.

#### 9 NOVEMBER 2016

Discussion workshop on the maps to be integrated in the Draft Management Plan. Conservation International produces maps of protected areas.

#### **20** DECEMBER 2016

• 4th Management Committee which works on the strategic document before the public consultation.

#### 21 DECEMBER 2016

• Press conference following the 4th Management Committee.

Meeting with traditional chiefs, Gatope tribe (Voh), DMA FSE







**RELATED SUS-OBJECTIVES** IN THE MANAGEMENT

**27** Promote the Park in New Caledonia

**28** Facilitate participative management

29 Make information accessible

#### INVOLVING LOCAL POPULATIONS

To meet Objective 10 of the Management Plan, some members of the Management Committee took initiatives. For example. The Pew Charitable Trusts produced a movie entitled « un océan en héritage », broadcasted on local tv NC 1ère on 25 October 2016, organized a debate on the Natural Park of the Coral Sea on 8 September 2016 as part of the New Caledonia Underwater Film Festival, as well as public meetings with Pierre-Yves Cousteau during Objective Blue, had an information booth during the Sea Festival in Thio.



In the Customary Senate Headquarters, december 2016, DMA FSE

In 2016, there were many discussions, sharing of experiences, and decisions which contributed to reaching the set objectives and preparing the public consultation. In July and December 2016, two Management Committee Meetings took place. In preparation for these two meetings, nine board meetings and a number of group working sessions, which included every member of the Management Committee, took place. Several actors including scientists from the IRD, and the University of New Caledonia, the IUCN, the Maritime Museum, the Conservatory for Natural Areas, and the Maritime Cluster worked alongside them. In total, 50 different people participated in the debates.



Differents actors are participated in the debates

#### **PREPARATING THE** STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGIC DOCUMENT

Until April 2016, four groups worked on the Park's different ecosystems: coral, insular, pelagic as well as on their connections and their crosscutting aspects. On May 12, the work undertaken by the four groups was shared. The work continued on 20 and 25 May 2016, in smaller groups. In June 2016, a group including the three NGOs seating on the Management Committee, the Department for Maritime Affairs, and the Marine Protected Area Agency fine-tuned the synthesis of the information gathered on 12 May. In July, the Management Committee approved the Structure of the Draft Management Plan and launched four New Working Groups to continue the process of developing the chapters of the Management Plan. Then, in December 2016, the last Managing Committee of the year discussed the content of the Management Plan, which was to be made public as part of a meeting with the general public.



#### **CONTRIBUTION FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

took place, in Thio, during the Sea Festival, at the Teari Shopping Centre in Koné and at the Centre for the

#### EXPAND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE PARK





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#### **BLUE BOATS**



**RELATED SUB-OBJECTIVE** 

IN THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

32 Organize an efficient operational monitoring system in place



Illegal fishing in the Natural Park, DMA FSE

The illegal fishing of sea cucumbers in New Caledonia's maritime space, by Vietnamese vessels called blue boats, is a new phenomenon. It started in 2016 and led to the massive arrival of fishing vessels whose fifteen-person crew dives to collect important quantities of sea cucumbers with a water pipe. This practice takes place as much on the far-away islands and reefs as it does in the Island and North Provinces' territorial waters. In 2016, 34 vessels were detected, observed and reported in New Caledonia's maritime space, including two in the Park's waters.

#### **COLLABORATE FOR** BETTER MONITORING

In 2016, the relationship with the Navy was strengthened. The shared roadmap was updated; a particular emphasis was placed on data and information sharing to facilitate the monitoring and control of human presence in the Natural Park of the Coral Sea's waters. In terms of policing fishing activities, and in addition to their involvement in the fight against the illegal fishing of sea cucumbers, the New Caledonian Armed Forces (FANC) work closely with Australia, New Zealand and the United States. This group, named QUAD (Quadrilateral Defense Cooperation Group) conducts joint, largescaled control operations on longliners which operates in international waters in the southern part of the Natural Park of the Coral Sea, on an annual basis. The regulation regarding New Caledonia's fishing policy (deliberation 50/CP of 20 April 2011) was modified to make the fight against illegal fishing in New Caledonia's maritime space more efficient.

In 2016, 34 Blue Boats were detected, observed and reported in New **Caledonia's maritime** space, including 28 in the **Park's waters** 

Personnel costs	60 MF
Vessel operations costs	12 MF
Onboard observers program	9 MF
Studies	8 MF
General administrative costs	4 MF
Total	93 MF



# INTEGRATE

THE PARKON A LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SCALE





Several dynamics have been put in place to give the Park some visibility on a regional and international scale. Regional cooperation with Vanuatu, the Salomon Islands, Australia and Fiji are appropriate considering the fact that the Park share borders with these countries. Taking into account the regional context facilitates the coherence of management measures between neighboring countries and opens the possibility of mutualizing operational resources in the future.

#### 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

January 2016 : The Natural Park questions other Marine Protected Areas, member of Big Ocean, on the composition and the organization of their scientific committees. Big Ocean is an informal

Hawaii - February 2016 : The Head of the Department for Maritime Affairs participates in the

Australia – May 2016 : The first « Coral Sea » newsletter is published in collaboration with the intent seeking to reinforce the cooperation between France, New Caledonia and Australia as part of the sustainable management of the Coral Sea. Another newsletter is expected to be published

French Polynesia - June 2016 : The Head of the Department for Maritime Affairs participates in to the workshop on sustainable management of the marine areas and species, organized by the French Polynesian Department for the Environment. The following issues were discussed: ecotourism, the 2016 Year of the Whale and the conservation plans for marine species and spaces that are being managed. (EEZ, coastal areas).

Galapagos – August 2016 : An agent from the Fishing and Marine Environment Service participates in the Third UNESCO Heritage Sites Managers Meeting.

Hawaii - September 2016 : The Head of the Department for Maritime Affairs participates in the 8th BigOcean Meeting in Hawaii.

Hawaii - September 2016 : The Head of the Department for Maritime Affairs presents the Natural Park during the World Conservation Congress organized by the IUCN in Hawaii. France had organized an event on French Marine Areas.

#### THE COOK **ISLANDS**' **DELEGATION IN NEW CALEDONIA**

The twining of Marine Protected Areas in New Caledonia and the Cook Islands facilitates the sharing of knowledge and experiences. After a meeting between three New Caledonian agents and the managers of the Marae Moana Area in the Cook Islands, a visit to New Caledonia took place in May 2016. Kevin Iro from Marae Moana, and Travel Tou. customary representative from the Cook Islands visited New Caledonia. They met with Anthony Lecren, Minister for Customary Affairs and the EEZ, the Economic, Social and Environmental, and the South Province so that the visitors could get a better grasp of the collectivity's management policy in terms of Marine Protected Area. Finally, the delegation also spent a day with customary representative of the Paicî Cèmuhi area in Touho.



#### Moana Park, were in Touho, may 2016.

#### THE HYDROPHONES ON THE APEX MISSION

Some scientific missions illustrate the benefits of regional cooperation such as having a more finetuned and informed vision. The APEX program is a good example. Started in 2014, it aims to study the ecology of reef-sharks in New Caledonia, with a particular focus on the Natural Park of the Coral Sea. This project's specificity is that it connects French (from IRD and the University of Montpellier) American and Australian scientists to cross-check data on the sharks' genetics, demography, migration and eating habits, to better manage these endangered and iconic species).

In 2016, four missions took place in the Natural Park: in May, July, October and November respectively. Some campaigns prioritized data collection from underwater listening stations, others aimed at changing the stations' batteries : 32 of them are located on Entrecasteaux, 15 in the lagoon's greater North area and four on the West coast of the "Grande Terre", New Caledonia's main island



In 2016, water samples were collected and sound beacons were placed underneath the skin of White Tip Reef Sharks, most notably in Entrecasteaux. As of today, data from the stations show more than 2 million detections on the entire network. This data will be analyzed in 2017. The Australian Government established a network in collaboration with Australian Institutes and Universities several years ago. Since scientists use the same material, New Caledonian fish carrying sound beacons (or marked) which travel to Australia can be detected if they reach the Australian network. Their transit will be detected on reports from Australian hydrophones.



Travel Tou, customary representative from Cook Islands', Karine Bachelier-Bourat, interpreter and Kevin Iro of the Marae

Map of the acoustic network established between New Caledonia and Australia, APEX project





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#### RELATED SUS-OBJECTIVES IN THE

#### MANAGEMENT PLAN

- 5 Create or reinforce the protection statutes for rare and migratory species
- 6 Protect key habitats indispensable to these species' life cycle
- 7 Pay particular attention to the Park's iconic species
- 27 Promote the Park in New Caledonia
- 29 Make information accessible
- 34 Increase knowledge to help management
- **40** Promote the Park in and have it recognize by international institutions



Jump of a humpack whale, DMA FSE

#### MAPPING EXPLORERS CARTOGRAPHIQUES FOR WHALES AND TURTLES

A tool called a mapping explorer, put in place by the Department for Technologies and Information Services and the Fisheries and Environment Service from the Department for Maritime Affairs, allows the monitoring Green turtles and humpback whales' movements. To be able to track the animals, they first need to be equipped with satellite beacons whose data are then integrated into a dedicated mapping software. The data's precision (day, time, location) allows the tracking the journey of the beacons carried by the animals. A first experiment was conducted on humpback whales during the MARACAS 2 campaign which took place between 22-26 september around Walpole. IRD researchers were on a mission onboard the Amborella. Once the beacons started to emit, migration maps were able to be created.

People connected to the migration explorer Georep were able to visualize Ornella, Chester, Samba and Wally's movements. As of late 2016, the explorer has been viewed 3000 times. A second experiment, this time involving Green Turtles, has been in preparation with the NGO WWF since December 2016.



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