

21 December 2016

By Email

sempf@doc.govt.nz

## To the South-East Marine Protection Forum

### ***Re: The consultation on the proposed marine protected areas for New Zealand's South Island East Coast***

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the proposed marine protected areas for the South Island South- East Coast.

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is the peak body for the tourism industry in New Zealand. With around 1,500 members, TIA represents a range of tourism-related activities including accommodation, adventure and activities, attractions and transport operators, airports and airlines, as well as related tourism services. The primary role of TIA is to be the voice of the tourism industry. This includes working for members on advocacy, policy, communication, events, membership and business capability. The team is based in Wellington and is led by Chief Executive, Chris Roberts.

Tourism 2025 ([www.tourism2025.org.nz](http://www.tourism2025.org.nz)), an industry-led, government supported economic growth framework was launched in New Zealand in 2014 and has set an aspirational goal of reaching \$41 billion in annual tourism revenues by 2025. The industry's focus is on growing value faster than volume. The Tourism 2025 framework is based around five key themes which are: Insight, Connectivity, Productivity, Visitor Experience and Target for Value. While the five themes of the framework remain unchanged, due to the current growth being experienced by Tourism the emphasis in some focus areas has shifted. Sustainability is one of the themes now being given greater emphasis. There is a desire and expectation that long term sustainability, from an economic, environmental, cultural, and social aspect, is becoming a core value against which all decisions are being tested.

### ***TIA would like to take the opportunity to support the Forest and Bird submission on the proposed marine protected areas for New Zealand's South Island East Coast.***

We agree that the establishment of this network of marine reserves is a step in the right direction, but that it is critical to extend the boundaries and protection levels in order to establish a truly sustainable marine ecology.

Tourism is an important part of the economy on the South East coast; MBIE monthly regional tourism estimates for the Dunedin region show annual visitor spend as \$684 million to 1 December 2016. The vast majority of this spend, \$458 million, comes from domestic visitors with the remaining \$174m from international tourists.

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supporting TIA and the  
tourism industry



Nature tourism is a vital platform for the Dunedin tourism economy, and for the regions which border the proposed reserve areas; from the wild and scenic Catlins to the albatross and yellow eyed penguin viewing further along the coast.

The proposed reserves will be crucial in protecting the species that enable these existing businesses and over time is likely to create vastly enriched nature tourism opportunities - as evidenced by the success of the Goat Island Marine Reserve at Leigh, north of Auckland, which now attracts over 350,000 snorkelers, divers, general visitors and marine scientists each year.

Enabling a sustainable marine ecology with robust access for visitors in an area where domestic tourism is predominant is also directly supportive of the Department of Conservations' stretch goal of *'90% of New Zealanders' lives are enriched through connection to our nature'*.

In summary, TIA supports the submission by Forest and Bird and feels that solid issues are discussed that need to be taken into account.

For further information or clarification, please contact:

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