

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy

Malé, Republic of Maldives

Ministry of Environment Malé, Republic of Maldives.

Economically fulfilled – Societal peace

Number: (IUL)438-ENV/438/2019/175

Announcement

Pursuant to Article 4 of Law no. 4/93 (Environmental Protection and Preservation Act), with reference to announcement no. 138-EE/2009/19 on 5th June 2009, the protected '**1-kilometre-wide area, starting from the west of the reef of Rangali in the south side of Ari Atoll, between the breakwaters outside reefs of the islands in the north corner of the reef of Dhigurah**' is established as '**South Ari Marine Park**' starting from 11th July 2019. Maintenance of the area shall be in accordance with a management plan prepared according to guideline number: 2018/R-78 (The guideline pertaining to the protection and sustaining of the nature of such places). It is also proclaimed the Environmental Protection Agency's Marine Rangers will be active in this area starting from 11th July 2019.

- a. Name of protected area: South Ari Marine Park area
- b. Details of the parameters of the protected area:
A 1-kilometre-wide area, starting from the west of the reef of Rangali in the south side of Ari Atoll, between the breakwaters outside reefs of the islands in the north corner of the reef of Dhigurah.
- c. Reasons why this site was determined as an area that needs to be protected and sustained in its natural state with its unique features.
This area is notable on a global scale, and its most distinctive feature is that Whale Sharks can be seen there year-round. Moreover, the richness of the reef in this region, coupled with the diversity of the marine life in it, make it a noteworthy environment. Some important species that can be found here include; turtles, rays and a variety of sharks.
- d. Category of natural protection and sustaining:
Category 6 - Habitat/ species management area
Category 7 – Protected areas with sustainable use
- e. Actions prohibited in this area
 1. Performing any action that could damage or bring changes to this area.
 2. Removing and taking of rocks, sand, coral and coral rubble from the area.
 3. Dumping or throwing away anything in these areas.
 4. Touching or harming the protected species in this area.
 5. Capturing, taking, or killing birds.
 6. Operating vessels with engines smaller than 10 feet in this area.
 7. Taking photos underwater using flashlight.
 8. Fishing and bait fishing using lights.
 9. Bringing Whale Sharks and other fish to shallow water using light.
 10. Introducing any species of living thing to this area.
- f. Activities allowed in this area:
 1. This area can be used for watching Whale Sharks from 6 AM to 6 PM.
 2. Vessels can be piloted in this area under 10 nautical miles. However, in the contact zone of species such as Whale Sharks (closer than 250 metres), the speed of the vessel should be lower than 5 nautical miles. Vessels should be piloted under 2 nautical miles



- when it is 50 metres from the Whale Sharks and other species that live in this area. If a vessel gets closer than this, the engine should be turned off.
3. A vessel in the contact zone can only get close to 10 metres from a Whale Shark.
 4. Vessels in this area should keep at least 250 metres between each other.
 5. Those who visit to watch the Whale Sharks should act according to the following guidelines.
 - a. Being in front of or touching a Whale Shark is prohibited.
 - b. When watching the Whale Sharks, an individual must not go further than its gills.
 - c. 4 metres must be kept between the people who want to see Whale Sharks and the Whale Sharks.
 6. Researching or photography and videography businesses must be done with special permission from the Environmental Protection Agency.

8th Dhu-al Qadah 1440
11th July 2019