

ACT NO. 16 OF 2018: MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING ACT, 2018

The Marine Spatial Planning Act establishes the mechanism for the development of marine spatial planning in South Africa. It facilitates the establishment of a National Working Group, a Directors – General Committee and a Ministerial Committee. The act limits the area of the spatial planning to South African waters meaning South Africa’s territorial waters, EEZ and the continental shelf but excluding freshwater bodies and estuaries.

Marine spatial planning objectives:

- Develop and implement a system to manage the changing environment and make it accessible by all sectors;
- Promote sustainable economic opportunity as part of the ocean economy;
- Conserve the ocean for current and future generations;
- Facilitate responsible use of the ocean;
- Provide documentation, mapping and understanding of the physical, chemical and biological ocean processes and opportunities in, and threats to, the ocean; and
- Ensure South Africa meets its international obligations.

The act sets out the parameters for Marine Spatial Plans. However, it will be the National Working Group’s responsibility will be to establish a marine spatial planning framework and develop marine area plans. This process will include consultation on the said draft framework and draft plans as well as setting up a knowledge and information system to store relevant information. It is anticipated that the information system will tie in with the National Oceans and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS) for which a support viewer, to view related data, has already been developed (<https://www.ocims.gov.za/ocims-msp/>).

The Algoa Bay Project, which is the pilot project for the development of a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) in South Africa, is currently undertaking stakeholder involvement. The intention will be to hold workshops and include representatives from key sectoral interests, organisation and community groups in the development of a draft MSP.

Once a Draft Marine Spatial Plan has been prepared and passed through the consultation process it will be submitted to the Directors-General Committee and on to the Ministerial Committee for approval.

The Ministerial Committee will need to report to the Cabinet on the implementation of these plans every 2 years with the actual marine area plans reviewed every 5 years.

CES will be keeping up to date with the development of the Draft MSP to ensure that our clients are fully aware of the implications and that our deliverables consider the outcomes and recommendations of the MSP.