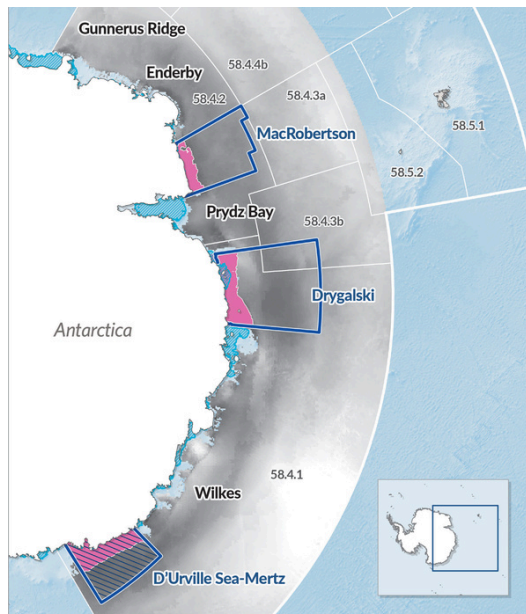




East Antarctic Marine Protected Area

East Antarctica lies directly south of the Indian Ocean. This deep polar wilderness is the most remote part of Antarctica, home to the coldest temperatures and strongest winds on earth.



970,000 square kilometers / 375,000 square miles

Proposal
since 2012

Sponsors: Australia and the European Union and its member states led by France

Co-Proponents: Chile, India, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay

Zones: Highly Protected and Research Zone

The proposed East Antarctic MPA aims to protect representative areas of open ocean and seabed biodiversity in East Antarctica, including several recognized important bird areas. The proposed MPA spans known foraging grounds for seals and penguins, which breed and molt on Antarctic ice and land, and rely on nearby food sources. Beneath the surface, unique habitats including cold-water reefs, seamounts and vulnerable seafloor areas support unique living communities in the frigid, oxygen-rich water.



Fur seals and elephant seals breed and undergo molting on both ice and land, while they search for food in the adjacent coastal waters.



An abundance of seabirds, such as the Antarctic petrel, snow petrel, as well as Adélie and Emperor penguins, forage and nest in East Antarctica.



The D'Urville Sea-Mertz area in East Antarctica plays a vital role in the formation of Antarctic Bottom Water, which is essential for the global ocean circulation.