



Weddell Sea Phase 1 Marine Protected Area

The Weddell Sea is situated in the Southern Ocean, south of the Atlantic Ocean and east of the Antarctic Peninsula. This polar wilderness is best-known as the setting for Shackleton's dramatic Endurance expedition. Today, wildlife thrives here in some of the most pristine, intact, ice-covered ecosystems on earth.

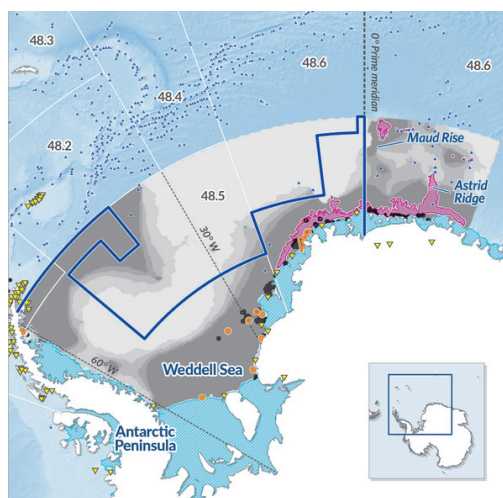
2 million square kilometers / 790,000 square miles

Proposal
since 2018

Sponsor: European Union and its member states, led by Germany

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

Zones: General Protection, Special Protection, Fisheries Research Zone



Weddell Sea Marine Protected Area Proposal

General Protection Zone
Fisheries Research Zone
Special Protection Zone

Conservation value of area

<20%
21-40%
41-60%
61-80%
81-100%

Additional important features:

Sponge distribution
Important Bird Areas
Seamounts
Ice shelf
CCAMLR subareas (numbered)

Note: The "conservation value of area" represents the percentage of time an area was selected for protection using the Marsan model.
Sources: Delegation of the European Union and its Member States and Norway to CCAMLR (2019), "Proposal to Establish a Marine Protected Area Across the Weddell Sea Region (Phase 1)," https://www.ccamlr.org/en/ccamlr-38/K_Teschke_et_al.
"Scientific Background Document in Support of the Development of a CCAMLR MPA in the Weddell Sea (Antarctica)—Part C: Data Analysis and MPA Scenario Development" (2016), <http://epic.awi.de/41178>; unpublished sponge distribution in Weddell Sea MPA planning area provided by the Alfred Wegener Institute; C.M. Harris et al., "Important Bird Areas in Antarctica: 2014 Summary," BirdLife International and Environmental Research & Assessment Ltd.; C. Yesson et al., "Knots and Seamounts in the World Ocean: Links to Shape, KML, and Data Files," *Pangaea* (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1594/PANGAEA.757563>.
CCAMLR: GEBCO: Natural Earth

The Weddell Sea is undergoing rapid changes. Studies reveal that certain areas of the Weddell Sea are experiencing ocean warming at a rate five times faster than other regions at similar depths. This warmer and windier weather is impacting sea ice and various marine habitats, creating pressure on delicately balanced ecosystems to rapidly adapt. The proposed Weddell Sea Phase 1 MPA encompasses coastal zones along the eastern Antarctic Peninsula, as well as the Weddell Sea gyre and ice shelves. Once established, this MPA will be the largest of its kind on the planet.



The Weddell Sea provides a vital sanctuary for juvenile Antarctic krill (*Euphausia superba*), ice krill (*Euphausia crystallorophias*), Antarctic silverfish (*Pleuragramma antarctica*) and Antarctic toothfish (*Dissostichus mawsoni*).



Below the surface, an array of unusual creatures – many of them found nowhere else on earth – thrive on the nutrient-rich seabed. Glass sponges and cold-water corals are but some of the unique creatures that call the Weddell Sea floor home.



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