

Guidelines: A prior assessment process for the designation of ASPA and ASMAs

Appendix 4 CEP XX Report

The CEP noted the benefits of a prior assessment process for potential new ASMAs and ASPAs, including: (i) engaging all Parties in the process of designating new sites; (ii) recognising that all ASPAs and ASMAs are internationally designated; (iii) aiding Members in preparing management plans by allowing for feedback and comments from other Members earlier in the process; and (iv) facilitating consideration of the further systematic development of the protected areas system in accordance with Article 3 of Annex V to the Protocol, and with consideration of climate change implications. Proponent(s) of potential new ASPAs or ASMAs are therefore encouraged to engage the Committee in a prior assessment discussion.

Consequently, the following Guidelines were adopted at CEP XVIII Final Report (Appendix 3).

1. The proponent should submit information about planned ASMAs and ASPAs at the first possible CEP meeting after they have identified an area as a potential new ASPA or ASMA irrespective of whether a decision to start working on a management plan has been taken or not. It would be useful if the proponent submitted this information at the latest one year before intending to submit a management plan to the CEP for consideration.
2. The information submitted to the CEP should include:
 - The proposed location of the ASMA/ASPA.
 - The initial rationale behind the plans for proposing the designation¹, including specifying the legal basis for the designation found in Annex V; how it improves the representativeness of the protected areas network, and how it fits within the ACBR planning tool.
 - Other relevant information relating to the development of a management plan that the proponent country has available at the time of submission to the CEP meeting.
3. The proponent country is encouraged to facilitate further discussions and questions on the preliminary plans through e.g. informal discussions/exchanges on the CEP forum or directly with Member countries.

ASPA prior assessment template

To assist proponents provide the information detailed in the Guidelines (above) for potential ASPAs, a non-mandatory template has been developed for voluntary use and is available at Appendix A: *Antarctic Specially Protected Area prior assessment template*.

Appendix A: Antarctic Specially Protected Area prior assessment template¹

Proponents should only complete those sections of the template that they consider relevant to the assessment they have completed.

1	Name of potential Antarctic Specially Protected Area (ASP):			
2	Proponent(s) of potential ASPA:			
3	Location and approximate co-ordinates of potential ASPA:			
4	Is the potential ASPA within an existing Antarctic Specially Managed Area (ASMA)?			
5	Approximate size of potential ASPA:			
6	Main physical components contained within the potential ASPA (e.g. ice-free ground, lakes, ocean, ice shelf, permanent ice):			
7	Description of the initial rationale for area protection for the potential ASPA:			
8	Indication of the values to be protected within the potential ASPA, in accordance with Annex V Article 3(1):			
	<i>Value</i>	<i>Primary value</i>	<i>Secondary value</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
	Environmental values			
	Scientific values			
	Historic values			
	Aesthetic values			
	Wilderness values			
	Combination of values			
	Ongoing or planned scientific activities			
9	Further description of values to be protected			
10	The following characteristics are contained within the potential ASPA:			(Yes/No)
(a)	areas kept inviolate from human interference so that future comparisons may be possible with localities that have been affected by human activities			
(b)	representative examples of major terrestrial, including glacial and aquatic, ecosystems and marine ecosystems			
(c)	areas with important or unusual assemblages of species, including major colonies of breeding native birds or mammals			
(d)	the type locality or only known habitat of any species			
(e)	areas of particular interest to ongoing or planned scientific research			
(f)	examples of outstanding geological, glaciological or geomorphological features			
(g)	areas of outstanding aesthetic and wilderness value			

(h)	sites or monuments of recognised historic value	
(i)	such other areas as may be appropriate to protect environmental, scientific, historic, aesthetic or wilderness values, any combination of those values, or ongoing or planned scientific research	
11	Consideration as to whether the ASPA be protected primarily for conservation or scientific research purposes:	
12	Description of how the quality of the areas merits ASPA designation (e.g. representativeness, diversity, distinctiveness, ecological importance, degree of interference, science and monitoring uses):	
13	Assessment of the risk posed to the area due to human activities and impacts, natural processes, natural variability and viability, non-Antarctic threats, urgency and scientific uncertainty:	
<i>Designation of the protected area within a systematic environmental-geographical framework:</i>		
14	The area lies within the following Environmental Domains Analysis region(s) (Resolution 3 (2008)):	
15	The area lies within the following Antarctic Conservation Biogeographic Region (Resolution 6 (2012)):	
16	The area contains the following Antarctic Important Bird Areas (Resolution 5 (2015)):	
17	Short description of how the potential ASPA has been considered to improve the representativeness of the protected areas network:	
18	Other relevant information from the assessment process:	
19	Any relevant supporting documentation	

¹ In this context it is relevant to point to the ‘*Guidelines for implementation of the Framework for Protected Areas set forth in Article 3 of Annex V of the Environmental Protocol*’ (held under Resolution 1 (2000)), which includes guidance for such assessment processes.

N.B. For ASPAs with a substantial marine component, prior approval must be obtained from CCAMLR (Annex V, Article 6(2)).