

Open Letter of Support for the Adoption of Bermuda's Marine Spatial Plan

CALL TO ORGANISATIONS IN BERMUDA TO SIGN TO SUPPORT OUR OCEAN

To:

The Hon. Jache Adams
Minister of Public Works and Environment

From:

[Signatory organisations]

This open letter is being led by
the Bermuda National Trust



Bermuda's ocean is central to daily life on this island, but it is also under increasing pressure, and decisions made now will determine whether it continues to sustain future generations; — creating jobs, providing food security, supporting tourism and recreation, sustaining coastal protection, and shaping our identity as Bermudians. A healthy, well-managed ocean is essential to Bermuda's present and future prosperity.

We write in strong support of the **legal adoption of the Marine Spatial Plan (MSP)** developed through the Bermuda Ocean Prosperity Programme (BOPP), and its implementation through the forthcoming **Marine Development Act**.

Why This Matters Now







Many Bermudians have seen firsthand the changes taking place beneath the surface — fewer fish, degraded nursery habitats, and increasing competition for limited ocean space. These trends are not slowing and, without clear management, they will continue to erode livelihoods, community wellbeing, and economic opportunity. At the same time, experience locally and abroad shows that recovery is possible when management is clear, balanced, and enforced. The MSP provides a practical solution.

A Plan Built for Bermuda, by Bermuda

The MSP is the result of seven years of consultation and collaboration with a wide range of ocean users, including tourism operators, fishers, scientists, conservation organisations, industry, and government agencies. This process was not only extensive, but iterative, incorporating feedback, addressing concerns, and refining the plan to reflect both local knowledge and the best available science. This collaborative approach resulted in a balanced framework that accommodates essential ocean uses — such as shipping, infrastructure maintenance, fisheries, and tourism-while safeguarding areas critical to ecosystem health.

Clear Benefits for Bermuda

By supporting the Government's commitment to **fully protect 20% of Bermuda's Exclusive Economic Zone**, the MSP will deliver tangible benefits, including:

-  **Healthier reefs & replenished fish stocks**, supporting local fishers, reducing reliance on imports, & strengthening food security.
-  **Clear rules for marine development**, helping projects move forward with appropriate environmental review.
-  **Greater certainty for investment and development**, with clear spatial guidelines that reduce conflicts and delay.
-  **A stronger tourism product** built on vibrant marine life and ocean stewardship.
-  **Improved governance and enforcement** allowing resources to be used more effectively.
-  **Protection for Bermuda's coastlines and communities**, helping to reduce storm damage and safeguard homes, road, and public infrastructure as climate impacts increase.

A Balanced Approach for a Shared Ocean

The Marine Spatial Plan reflects a carefully considered balance between conservation and use. It recognises the importance of tourism and fishing to Bermuda's economy and culture, while taking the necessary steps to replenish fish stocks and protect the habitats that sustain them. At its core, the plan reflects a shared goal: **a productive ocean that continues to support Bermudians for generations to come.**

A Call for Leadership and Follow-Through

Public consultations and surveys have consistently shown that Bermudians expect a well-managed, adequately enforced, and healthy ocean. The Government committed to ocean protection as a national priority. Legal adoption of the MSP is the essential next step in turning that commitment into action and demonstrating Bermuda's leadership in ocean stewardship.

Our Call to Action

We respectfully urge the Government to act without delay to:

- Introduce and pass the Marine Development Act
- Formally adopt the Marine Spatial Plan and the associated Marine Protected Area network
- Ensure it is adequately resourced and effectively enforced

By doing so Bermuda can protect what its people already value, strengthen its blue economy, and secure a resilient ocean future for all.

The opportunity to secure Bermuda's ocean future is within reach; now is the time to act.

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