

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

What are MPAs?

Just like national parks on land, marine protected areas help safeguard areas of the ocean and marine animals.

41 MPAs

are found in the ocean around the South African mainland and islands.

87%

of marine ecosystem types are represented in our MPA network

5% of the ocean around South Africa is protected

57 736 km²

of the ocean around South Africa is protected

MPAs are an insurance policy for healthy oceans and ocean economies. They are an investment in our future well-being.



Photo: Jean Tresfon



Photo: Eve Marshall

MPAs protect marine ecosystems and marine biodiversity.

MPAs protect spawning and nursery areas for fish and undisturbed breeding grounds for other animals.





Photo: Steve Benjamin

No-take MPAs allow populations of fish and invertebrates to increase and restock adjacent fished areas.

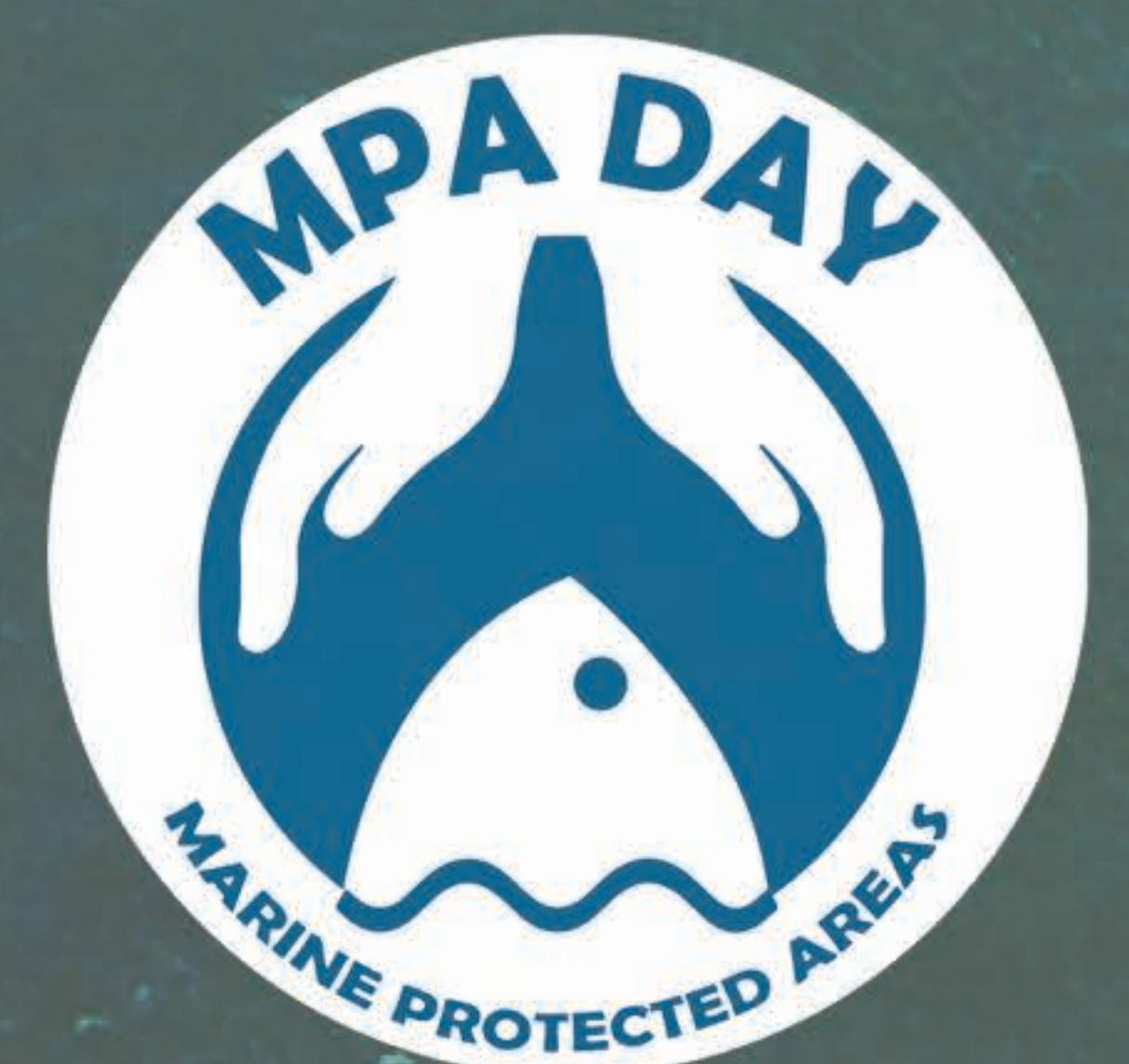


Photo: Ryan Daly

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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Protecting our natural heritage

150 different marine ecoregions found in South Africa's waters

Over **3800** marine species living in South African waters are found no-where else in the world.

South Africa has **10%** of the world's coral species

261 endemic fish species in South African waters

3 oceans around South Africa – Indian, Atlantic and Southern

290 estuaries along the South African coast



Photo: Peter Timm

MPAs help protect rare and endangered species. The submarine canyons of iSimangaliso MPA protect Coelacanths.

Our MPAs help protect different habitats such as coral and rocky reefs, kelp forests, rocky and sandy shores, estuaries and underwater canyons.



Photo: Eve Marshall

Seventy four, once a popular dining fish, was heavily overfished by the 1960's. Now it is protected and numbers are increasing, especially in MPAs.

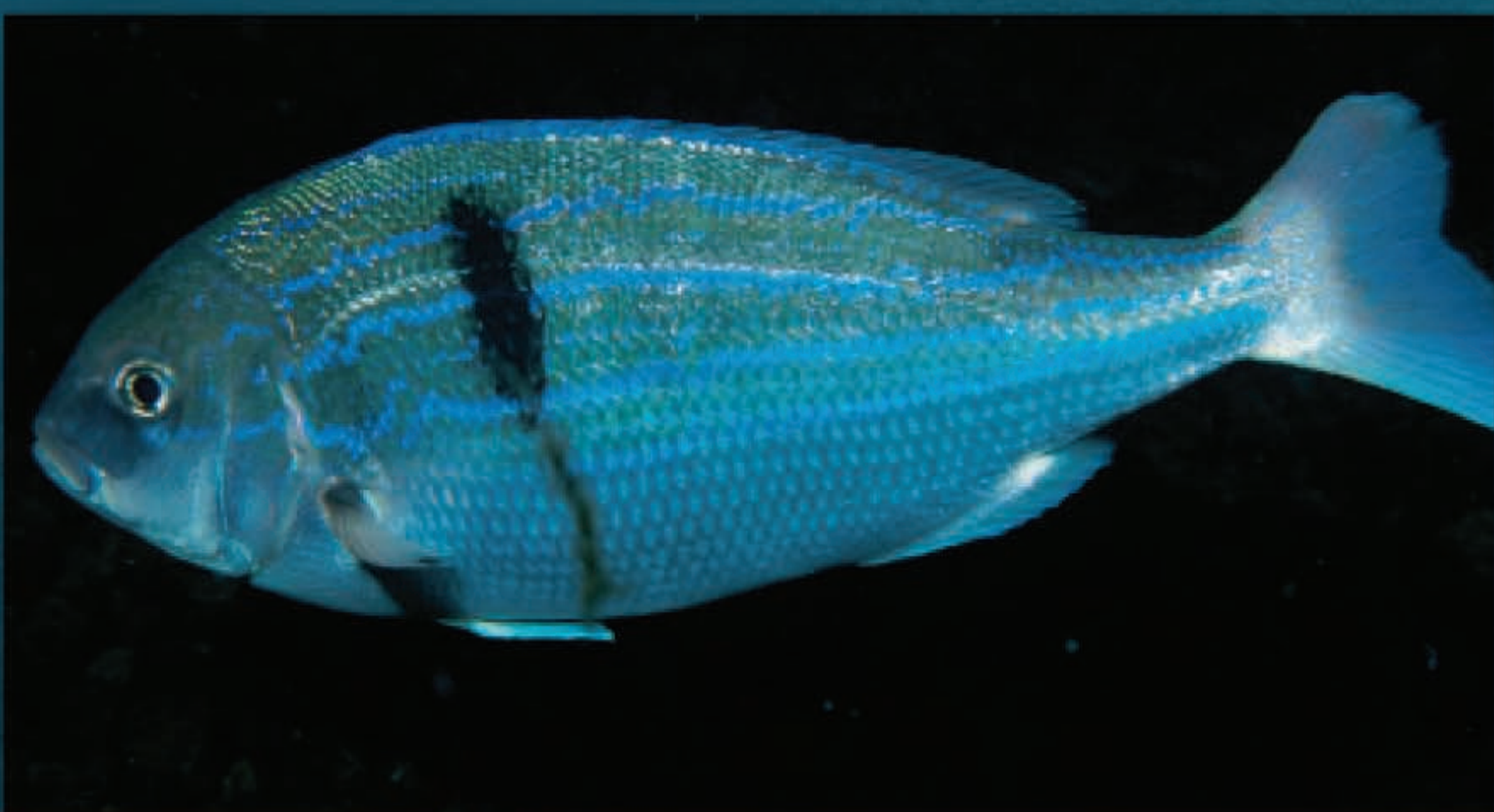




Photo: Dennis King

16% of the world's shark, skate and ray species are found in SA waters, many of which are threatened. MPAs protect many species of sharks and rays

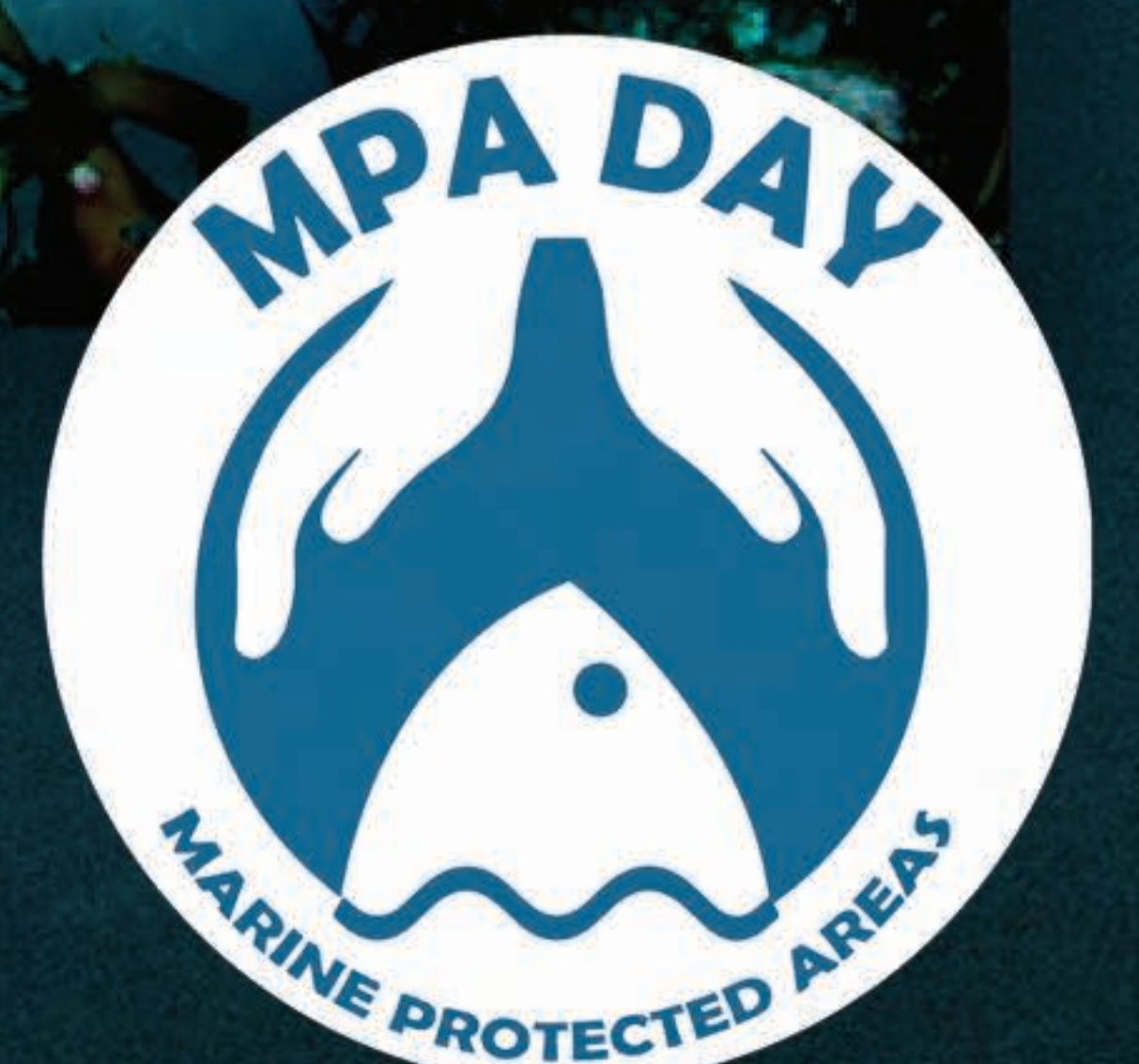
Photo: Morne Hardenberg



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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Protect an important food source

The fish and invertebrates in MPAs increase in size and abundance leading to spill-over into adjacent fished areas.

Less than **8%** of estuaries are protected in MPAs

1.1 million km² is the total area of South Africa's Exclusive Economic Zone

>2000 fish species found in South African waters

700 marine species are harvested

No-take MPAs provide safe spaces in which fish can breed undisturbed. Young fish mature into adulthood, without the pressure of fishing.



Photo: Steve Benjamin

MPAs protect spawning and nursery areas of many species of fish.



Photo: Judy Mann

Resident older, larger female fish that are protected in MPAs produce more and healthier eggs than the smaller fish found in fished areas.





Photo: Dennis King

In an increasingly industrialised ocean, MPAs help maintain food and job security provided by the fisheries sector.



Photo: Judy Mann

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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

MPAs are important for people

The oceans are a source of employment, food security, inspiration, education and relaxation.

22

commercial fisheries employ

43

thousand people in South Africa

500
thousand

people go fishing for fun on South Africa's coastline

Healthy shores support thousand small scale fishers

23

R400

million was the direct value of marine and coastal tourism in 2013



Photo: Judy Mann

MPAs help protect our cultural heritage. Many people turn to the ocean for cleansing, worship, inspiration and rejuvenation.



Photo: E KZN Wildlife

MPAs are amazing outdoor classrooms. Students of all ages can explore and enjoy nature in our MPAs.



Photo: Judy Mann

MPAs help to create sustainable jobs.

Coastal resorts are popular holiday destinations. The pristine condition of MPAs attract people wanting to get close to nature.

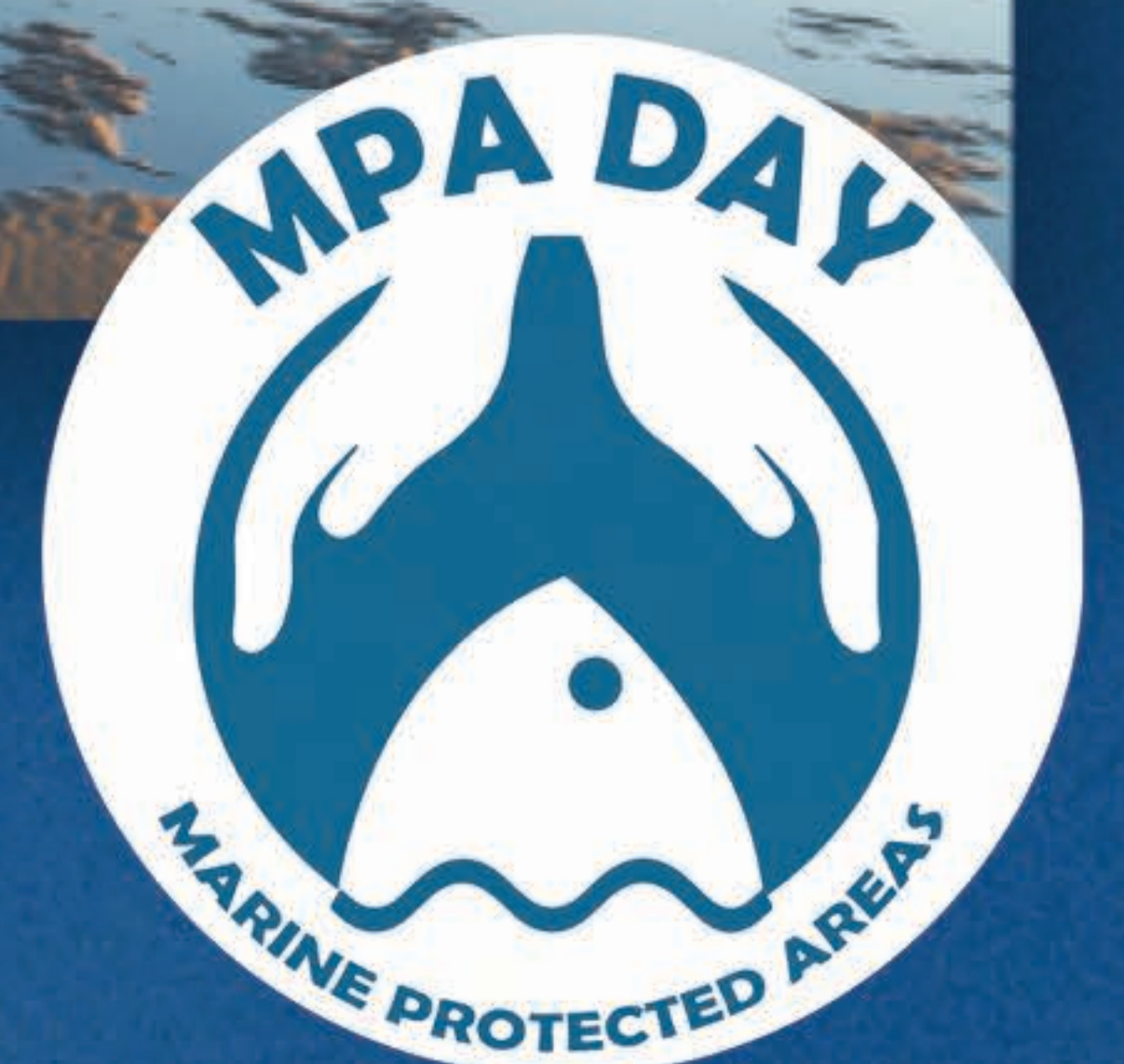


Photo: E KZN Wildlife

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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

37% of South Africa's seabirds are threatened

Pressures and threats
The ocean is getting busier as pressures in the marine environment diversify and expand.

4/5 turtle species are threatened

30% of South Africa's endemic seabreams are threatened

55 species of invasive alien plants and animals have been found in our ocean

300 exploratory offshore oil and gas wells have been drilled

As the demand for a healthy fish diet increases so does pressure on fish stocks increase.



Photo: Jean Tresfon

Climate change and plastic pollution are threatening many marine species.

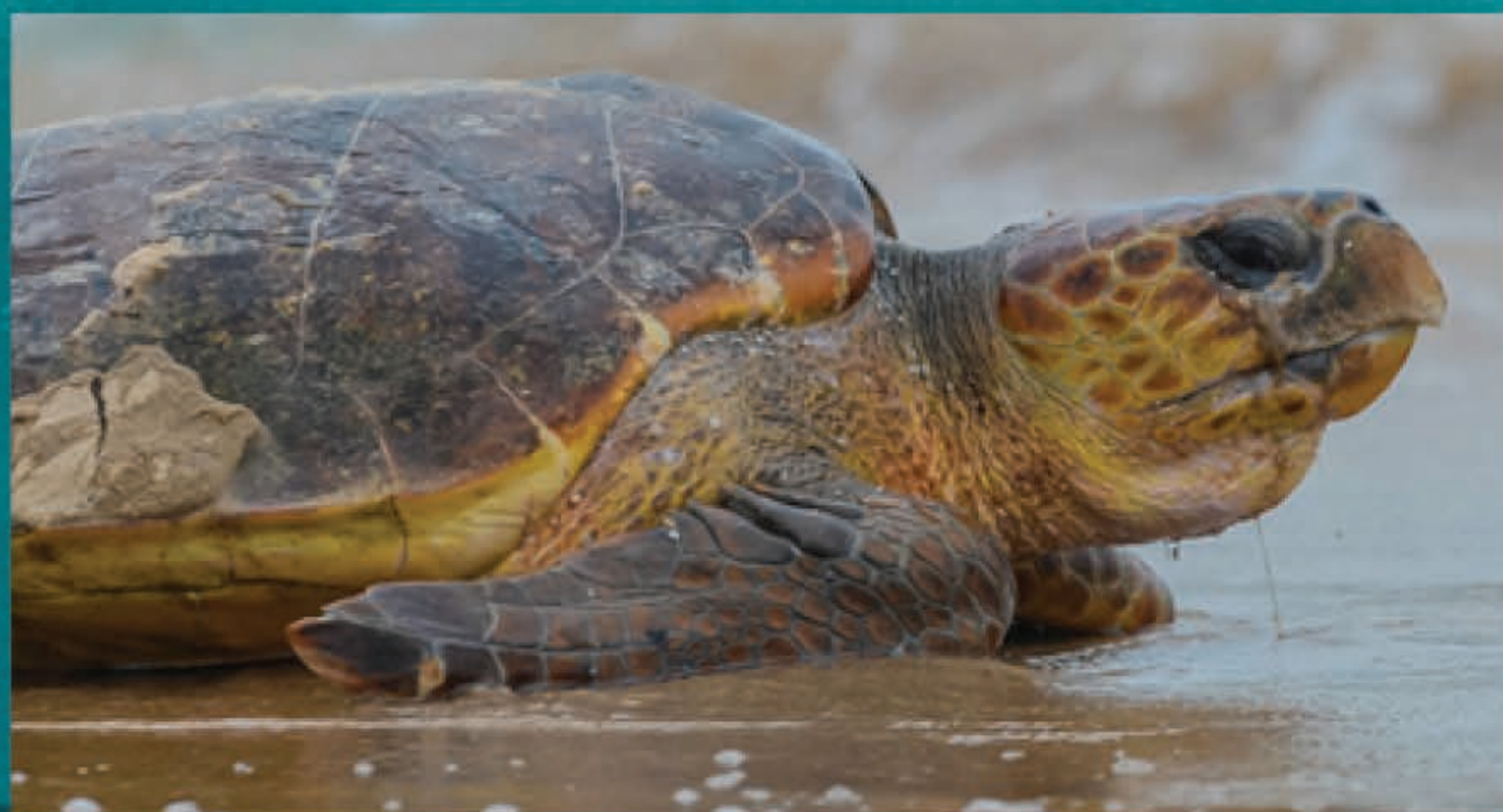


Photo: Judy Mann

The increase in coastal development threatens coastal ecosystems, and puts pressure on natural processes.



Photo: Judy Mann

The effects of shipping and marine mining pose serious threats to ocean ecosystems.



Photo: E KZN Wildlife

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