



PRESS COMMUNIQUE

The Government of the Republic of Mauritius has decided to establish the Chagos Archipelago Marine Protected Area (CAMPa) which will cover approximately 645,835 km².

CAMPa will comprise the following four zones based on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categories for Marine Protected Areas:

(a) Strict Conservation Zone (IUCN Category Ib)

This zone, which will cover 23,712 km² (3.67 per cent of CAMPa), is designated primarily for the conservation of sensitive or special ecosystems, resources or natural features. It is intended to protect the biodiversity of the Great Chagos Bank. The Chagossian community would be allowed to undertake supervised visits to conserve their traditional, spiritual and cultural values.

(b) Conservation Zone (IUCN Category II)

This zone is the largest zone covering 612,611 km² (94.86 per cent of CAMPa). It is designated for the conservation of the area in general and in particular, seamounts and associated ecosystems located in the deeper areas of the Chagos Archipelago, as well as important ecosystems such as coral species, foraging grounds and other living resources including the bird population. Environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor activities would be allowed. Fishing would be permitted under an agreed sustainable quota for artisanal, traditional, ceremonial and subsistence purposes.

(c) Habitat Protection Zone (IUCN Category IV)

Spanning 2,251 km² (0.35 per cent of CAMPa), this zone provides for the conservation of bank areas. A low level of artisanal fishing compatible with nature conservation for the sustenance of the local community would be allowed and controlled. Recreation and appropriate small-scale tourism would also be permitted.

(d) Traditional Zone for Resettlement (IUCN Category V)

Covering 7,261 km² (1.12 per cent of CAMPA), this zone would support the sustainable resettlement of members of the Chagossian community whilst enabling the conservation and protection of important landscapes and seascapes, including important marine species. A low level of artisanal fishing compatible with nature conservation for sustenance of the Chagossian community will be allowed.

By categorising CAMPA into zones with varying levels of protection and use, this zoning framework addresses ecological priorities whilst allowing sustainable resettlement in the Chagos Archipelago. No commercial fishing will be allowed in the entire CAMPA.

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Prime Minister's Office
Republic of Mauritius**