



Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands

Office of the Commissioner
Government House,
Stanley,
Falkland Islands.

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Enactment of the Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance (2011)

The Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands is pleased to announce the enactment of the Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance (2011). This is a significant moment for a Territory that is home to some of the highest densities of wildlife on Earth. The Ordinance replaces legislation which is in some instances nearly 100 years old, and provides for the protection of wildlife and habitats on land and at sea.

The legislation includes:

- Protection for native species and habitats
- Prohibition of inhumane methods of capturing or killing animals
- Prohibition of possession or transport of live or dead wildlife
- Powers to designate and manage Specially Protected Species and Habitats, Specially Protected Areas and Marine Protected Areas

The Ordinance provides a legal framework that is modern and fit for purpose, and addresses some of the most pressing issues that face the Territory today in a rapidly warming world.

The Ordinance also puts measures in place to protect against invasive non-native species that threaten the natural environment, and bolsters our existing policies which have made great strides in preventing non-native species being released into the environment.

One of the most difficult aspects of developing this legislation was maintaining access to the Territory for visitors without threatening South Georgia and the South Sandwich Island's precious environments. In line with the Government's commitment under the Environment Charter to consult on matters pertaining to the environment, the legislation was influenced

following a stakeholder consultation, which provided feedback from the Territory's diverse group of users and interested individuals.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds congratulated the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (SGSSI) for making the development of nature protection legislation a high priority. Clare Stringer, International Officer for Overseas Territories said: "South Georgia holds some of the most amazing wildlife on UK Territory. Implementing this new ordinance will support the continued restoration and protection of its superb natural values, and we hope other Overseas Territories will follow this example."

The Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Nigel Haywood said: "This is a major step forward in protecting the island's native wildlife and habitats, and demonstrates our commitment to the continued good governance and responsible stewardship of the Territory. The Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance addresses some of the most pressing issues that the Government faces in a rapidly changing world."

This legislation will be quickly followed by subsidiary legislation to declare the first Specially Protected and Marine Protected Areas in the Territory.

Dr Martin Collins, Chief Executive Officer and Director of Fisheries said "Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are an important and effective tool in our management of the marine environment, enabling the conservation of marine biodiversity and the maintenance of regional productivity. Although large areas around South Georgia are already protected by our fisheries policies, none of this protection is enshrined in law. The ability to declare MPAs will afford the unique marine environment of South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands considerably greater protection."

The Wildlife and Protected Areas Ordinance was signed by the Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands on 31st May 2011.

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