

APPENDIX B: NEW SCHEDULE 4A -SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS - MARINE CRITERIA

Identify areas of significant indigenous vegetation and the significant habitats of indigenous fauna in the coastal marine area as Significant Ecological Areas. An area that meets one of the inclusion criteria a – f is considered significant

Sites should not generally be considered significant if they meet one of the exclusion criteria 7-8

INCLUSION CRITERIA

1 Recognised international or national significance

It is an area identified as internationally or nationally significant for either indigenous marine ecosystems or biodiversity, or with reference to the species that utilise these ecosystems

2 Threat status and rarity:

The area meets one of the criteria below:

- (a) It is a habitat that is required to provide for the life cycle of a marine plant or animal that is locally rare and has been assessed under the New Zealand Threat Classification System (NZTCS), and determined to have a national 'At Risk' conservation status of Naturally Uncommon, Relict, Recovering and Declining. *OR*
- (b) It is a habitat that is required to provide for the life cycle of a plant or animal that occurs naturally in Otago and has been assessed by the Council to have a regional threatened conservation status including Regionally Critical, Endangered and Vulnerable and Serious and Gradual Decline *OR*
- (c) It is a habitat that is required to provide for the life cycle of a plant or animal that occurs naturally in Otago and has been assessed by a nationally or internationally recognised assessment process (e.g., NZTCS, IUCN) and determined to have a threatened conservation status including Critical, Endangered, or Vulnerable. *OR*
- (d) It is a habitat that occurs naturally in Otago and is required to provide for the life cycle of a marine animal that is listed as a Protected Species in Schedule 7A of the Wildlife Act (1953);*OR*
- (e) It is an indigenous marine habitat or ecosystem that occurs naturally in Otago and has been assessed by the Council or other national assessment process to be threatened based on evidence and expert advice; *OR*
- (f) It is an indigenous vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna that occurs within an indigenous coastal ecosystem as identified in NZCPS Policy 11b(iii) as being particularly vulnerable to modification.

3 Uniqueness or distinctiveness:

It meets one of the criteria below:

- (a) It is habitat for a marine plant or animal that is endemic or near-endemic to the Otago region; OR
- (b) It is an indigenous ecosystem that is endemic to the Otago region or supports ecological assemblages, structural forms or unusual combinations of species that are endemic to the Otago region. OR
- (c) It is a habitat that supports occurrences of a plant, animal or fungi that are the largest specimen or largest population of the indigenous species in Otago or New Zealand.

4 Diversity:

It meets one of the criteria below:

- (a) It is an intact habitat sequence extending across an environmental gradient, and including both floral and faunal habitat components; OR
- (b) It includes a large number of intertidal and/or sub tidal habitats; OR
- (c) It is a habitat type that supports a high species richness for its type.

5 Stepping stones, buffers and migration pathways:

It meets one of the criteria below:

- (a) It is a site which makes an important contribution to the resilience and ecological integrity of surrounding areas. OR
- (b) It is part of a network of sites that cumulatively provide important habitat for indigenous fauna or when aggregated make an important contribution to ecological function and integrity; OR
- (c) It is an example of an indigenous ecosystem, or habitat of indigenous fauna that is used by key species permanently or intermittently for an essential part of their life cycle, including migratory pathways, roosting or feeding areas; OR
- (d) It is an example of an ecosystem, indigenous vegetation or habitat of indigenous fauna, that is immediately adjacent to, and provides protection for, indigenous biodiversity in an existing protected natural area (established for the purposes of biodiversity protection for either terrestrial or marine protection) or an area identified as significant under the 'threat status and rarity' or 'uniqueness' criteria.

6 Representativeness:

It meets one of the criteria below:

- (e) It is an example of an indigenous marine ecosystem (including both intertidal and sub tidal habitats, and including both faunal and floral components) that makes up part of at least 10% of the natural extent of each of Otago's original marine ecosystem types and reflecting the environmental gradients of the region; AND

- (f) It is an example of an indigenous marine ecosystem, or habitat of indigenous marine fauna (including both intertidal and sub tidal habitats, and including both faunal and floral components), that is characteristic or typical of the natural marine ecosystem diversity of Otago; OR
- (g) It is a habitat that is important to indigenous species of Otago, either seasonally or permanently, including for migratory species and species at different stages of their life cycle (and including refuges from predation, or key habitat for feeding, breeding, spawning, roosting, resting, or haul out areas for marine mammals); OR
- (h) It is an ecosystem that contains an intact ecological sequence across an environmental gradient (e.g., intact intertidal vegetation sequence including sea grass, salt marsh, and terrestrial coastal vegetation); OR
- (i) It is an ecosystem that contains a large number of marine habitat types, with the full range of habitats represented that is typical for that depth and exposure within the Otago region; OR
- (j) It is a habitat or ecosystem of particular importance for indigenous or migratory species

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- 7 It is a site maintained for aquaculture production of either native or non-indigenous marine fauna or flora.
- 8 It is a novel or synthetic ecosystem dominated by non-indigenous marine fauna or flora.