



Project Endorsement Form

1. PROJECT TITLE

Full title	Valuing the Gascoyne Marine Park
Acronym	
Website	
Keywords (up to 10, describing the project research)	Benthic, biodiversity, habitat, mesophotic, canyons, abyss
New initiative or continuing programme?	New

2. APPLICANTS

Lead applicant / Project Leader / key research contact person:

First name	John
Last name	Keesing
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Institutional or personal website	

Other key participants / research team leaders: (repeat as needed)

First name	
Last name	
Role in the project	
Affiliation	
Country	
Email address	
Institutional or personal website	

N.B.: Please note that all these names and contact details will be added to the IIOE-2 membership database.

3. ABSTRACT– Brief description of the project: (1/4 page maximum)

This will be placed on the IIOE-2 Website after endorsement.

A major survey of parts of the eastern Indian Ocean will take place aboard Australia's national research vessel the RV Investigator in 2022. Largely unexplored and one of Australia's newest marine parks, the Gascoyne Marine Park (GMP) extends from about 100 to 5500 m depth at the edge of Australia's EEZ close to longitude 110° which has already been revisited as part of the IIOE-2 with the RV *Investigator*. Most of the ecological knowledge in the GMP is hitherto limited to the shallow areas of the shelf along the Ningaloo

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Reef while the majority of the GMP covers abyssal habitats and the dramatically steep, rugged habitats that link the two. The GMP includes 200 km of mesophotic reefs to about 400 m depth along the Ningaloo reef tract, the Ningaloo and Cloates canyons from 1000 m to 3000m depth and perpendicular to the coast (explored in 2020 with the RV *Falkor*) and, parallel to the coast, a steep 50-km wide transition from the Exmouth Plateau at 1000 m down the Cape Range Escarpment to the 5500 m Cuvier Abyssal Basin. The voyage will explore the biodiversity of benthic habitats and demersal fish communities of the Marine Park and adjacent areas.

4. LINKS TO IIOE-2 SCIENCE PLAN: (1/2 page maximum)

How do you anticipate your project to contribute to the IIOE-2 strategy and science delivery, with reference to which (either one or more) of the six IIOE-2 Science Plan themes that your project responds. Please state the specific issues and questions addressed by your project in the context of the IIOE-2 Science Plan themes and key issues.

Our project best aligns with IIOE2 Theme 6 “Unique Geological, Physical, Biogeochemical and Ecological Features of the Indian Ocean”, and in particular addresses some of the point made in the science plan about the need for better understanding the “physical, biogeochemical and ecological effects of shallow seamounts and ridges in the Indian Ocean and associated MPAs need to be assessed in relation to their contributions to Indian Ocean biodiversity and fisheries management.” The science plan notes that these aspects in the Indian Ocean have not as yet received “adequate research attention.”

5. INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION(S):

Is the project part of a related multi-national activity? **NO**

If No, would you welcome international collaboration in your project? **NO** (too hard with Covid restrictions)

6. REGION(S) OF STUDY

Provide a description of ‘where’ the research is to be conducted (for field based activities) and/or the region or regions to which the research pertains (you are encouraged to consider providing either the coordinates of the area of studies or the coordinates of the planned cruise tracks, as well as a figure as an addendum to your proposal).

The Gascoyne Marine Park lies west of Exmouth which is on the mid west coast of Australia. The mid point of our operations will be about 22 degrees South and 112 degrees East. Operations will extend offshore to about 110 degrees E, south to 24 degrees South and north to 21.5 degrees South.

6. TIMETABLE OF THE PROJECT

Start date:	End date:
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Approx. 1 June 2022

Approx. 30 June 2022

7. LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROJECTS / PROGRAMMES / INITIATIVES

Is the project part of a related national or multi-national activity?

If yes, provide the related activity title and website for reference, if available:

The project is part of a series of surveys planned to explore the network of commonwealth Marine Parks in Australia

Is your project part of, or affiliated to, another SCOR, IOC or IOGOOS activity or project?

If “yes”, please indicate which activity or project:

No

8. DATA MANAGEMENT AND SHARING

1. Will new data be collected as part of this project (yes or no?)

Yes, data will be archived and managed by CSIRO.

2.

contact information if any, of the person in charge of the data management from whom the metadata can be accessed by interested IIOE-2 stakeholders.

Please note that for all IIOE-2-endorsed projects, IIOE-2 will have developed its own metadata portal. Once the project is endorsed, the project leader will be asked to provide the metadata information of the project.

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3. Recognizing the need for an initial period of exclusive data use, would you be willing to provide timely access to all data generated under this project and associated metadata in accordance with relevant national and funding agency data sharing policies? **YES**

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9. FUNDING

Please note that IIOE-2 strongly encourages funded/resourced projects. However, IIOE-2 may endorse projects yet to receive funding/resourcing if IIOE-2 endorsement can be clearly shown to significantly aid in prospects for funding/resourcing.

Has funding and resources to successfully achieve and undertake the project been obtained? Indicate the sources of funding and resources that have been approached and/or secured.

The voyage is being funded by Parks Australia and the CSIRO.

10. BENEFITS FROM IIOE-2 ENDORSEMENT (1/4 page maximum)

Specify why you are seeking endorsement and how the activity would benefit from endorsement, and how the IIOE-2 SC could assist in the implementation of your project.

Awareness and data sharing among projects operating in the area of interest will benefit our project and hopefully ours can benefit others operating in the region.

11. OPTIONAL: OTHER COMMENTS/INFORMATION/MATERIAL (length and detail may be at the discretion of and as deemed necessary by the applicant)

Please feel free to provide any other comments, information or materials that you feel relevant to your proposal for the IIOE-2 Steering Committee's information and benefit. You may provide this as general information or provide the additional comments/information/materials as relevant to any of the specific Sections above.

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2nd International
Indian Ocean
Expedition
2015-2020



(Signature of the PI)

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